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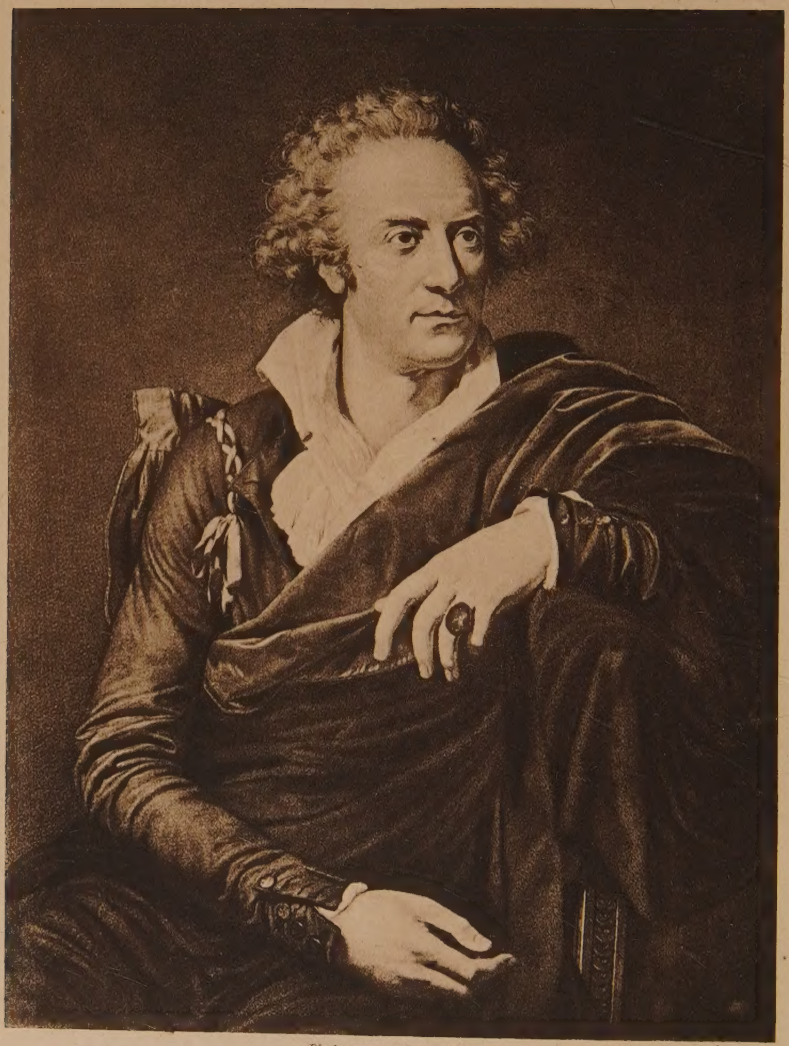

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VOLUME X

AUTOBIOGRAPHERS OF THE LATER REVOLUTIONARY DAYS

(1770—1804)

INCLUDING THE SELF-NARRATIVES OF

ALFIERI
Italy's Great tragic Poet and Apostle of Freedom

SOLOMON MAIMON
The Remarkable Jewish Philosopher

MADAME ROLAND
Noblest of French Revolutionists

JOHN MARSHALL
Chief Justice of the United States

ALEXANDER HAMILTON
Financial Founder of the United States

LAFAYETTE
"The Friend of America"

ADMIRAL NELSON
Britain's Greatest Naval Genius

MARY ROBINSON
Actress, Poetess, and Playtoy of a British Prince

ROBERT BURNS
Scotland's National Poet

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY BY

LYMAN P. POWELL
Former President of Hobart College

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INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME X

AUTOBIOGRAPHERS OF THE LATER REVOLUTIONARY DAYS

1770-1804

Our preceding volume noted that the great Age of Revolution, the first establishment of democracy as opposed to autocracy in the modern world, began with the American Revolution in 1775. It ended in 1804 when the French revolutionists were led by Napoleon to establish a new empire, of which the watchword was "La Gloire," military glory, oppression of other nations abroad, instead of "Liberty" at home.

During somewhat more than a quarter century, therefore, Democracy was making enormous and triumphant strides. The self-told narratives of her first great leaders in America, of Franklin, Washington and Jefferson appeared in our preceding volumes. But what of the young generation who followed these splendid leaders? What of the glowing youth born into a period of such enthusiasms, such widespread uplift of men's minds, that the poet Wordsworth, looking back to it cried out:

> "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
> And to be young was very heaven."

If asked to name the most important, the most typical youth of America at that time, almost every one would select Alexander Hamilton, the "boy patriot" of New York, the youthful aide of Washington, the later rival of Jefferson, the financial genius who saved his country from ruin, and founded the great "Federal" or conservative political party. Fortunately there exists from Hamilton's own hand a sketch of his life, though all too brief; and it is given here. Also we have a short "self-story" by another justly celebrated American who also served as a boy soldier and officer in the war for freedom. Later he was to be known as Chief-Justice Marshall, the great-

est lawyer of America, "the Interpreter of the Constitution"; but in those days he was only young John Marshall of Virginia. Marshall's fragmentary autobiographical remains may sound somewhat stiffly "lawyer-like," even his love letters, yet they help us much to appreciate the man and the atmosphere of that America in which he lived, the simple, noble, vigorous atmosphere of a freedom still young, still very earnest, and naturally exuberant with success.

While Hamilton and Marshall thus show us something of the spirit of their age—or rather, of their youth—we perhaps catch it even more vividly from the longer autobiography of that other remarkable youth of the period, the Marquis Lafayette. It is impressive and somewhat striking in the way of coincidence, not only that the same year of 1757 saw the birth of two such unusual young men as Hamilton and Lafayette, but also that the American Colonies, an outlying, little-known, frontier region of which neither was a native, should have drawn them both to its shores and given them fame, and that both, despite their youth, should have become the chief aides and dearest friends of the veteran Washington. It is well indeed to put their narratives side by side to learn how Washington chose his friends, and how the best youth of America, then as now, looked up with love and veneration to his stalwart form. If it is given to few men in life to meet and know any such magnificent personality as that of Washington, so too it is given to few even among the greatest men to have such devoted and such resplendent worshipers as Hamilton and Lafayette.

Lafayette's autobiography leads us from America back to France, to follow there once more, as in Jefferson's earlier narrative, the course of revolution, the advance of Democracy in Europe. Lafayette brought home with him from America not only great fame as having led his countrymen in an honorable and successful war, but also a clear understanding of Democracy and a youthful, perhaps over-optimistic, faith in its immediate and universal worth. The French Revolution followed inevitably upon that of America. Even the dull young French king Louis XVI and all his gay and heedless young court had seen the danger that menaced their order from a victory in America. They tried to restrain all the

thousands of French voices which soon echoed Lafayette's plea for democracy at home.

When the French Revolution actually broke out in 1789, Lafayette was at first among its leaders. His people looked to him to be the Washington of France. It is doubtful, however, if any man, however wise or strong, could have restrained the French populace once they had tasted blood. Too many centuries of aristocratic "privilege," aristocratic cruelty and neglect, lay behind them to be avenged. Lafayette sought to harmonize the court and the people, to keep the king in power as a constitutional monarch, to conduct the revolt with honor and moderation. He was brushed aside as choosing to be a part of the useless old furniture of the kingly system. The decaying court and courtiers, contemptuous and contemptible, resplendent in their virtues as in their vices, were completely swept away; and men rushed madly to the other extreme of the "Reign of Terror" (1793-1794).

Frenchmen proved themselves less fitted for self-government than the frontiersmen of America. The pioneer, from the relentless training of the frontier in self-sufficiency, learns the very qualities essential for successful democracy, the strength of will, the fair-mindedness, the watchful sacrifice of the present to the future. These are not learned from the guarded paternalism of city life. So the French went mad with a reckless frenzy. Lafayette, barely escaping execution, fled into exile and knew the inside of a foreign prison, found himself equally assailed by Austrian royalists and by French republicans.

By the side of Lafayette's autobiography, typical of the noblest young men of France and their agonizing disappointment in the revolution, let us place the autobiography of Madame Roland, the typical, noble French woman of her day. The remarkable and celebrated narrative of Madame Roland was written when she lay in prison during the "Reign of Terror" awaiting the execution which soon followed.

It would be a mistake to think of Madame Roland as a democrat in the sense of young Lafayette or of Jefferson, that is as one who would trust everything, in the last analysis, to the good sense and nobility of the mass of the people, one who holds faith in the power of the ordinary human brain to com-

prehend life's outline, and of the ordinary human conscience to control the passions. Madame Roland was rather a republican after the austere old Roman fashion. She dreamt of a self-selected autocracy of virtue, noble leaders who should sacrifice all personal advantages and devote themselves to governing and commanding the masses for the masses' good. She was a woman of force and power, she preached and spread her doctrines, she was among the foremost champions of the revolt in France; and then the revolt brushed her leadership aside, as it had brushed Lafayette's. She was declared a traitor to the very cause she had sought to serve; and she went to the guillotine with a proud lament that the mad democracy around her had so maltreated her ideal.

The autobiography of Madame Roland does not, however, confine us wholly to the blunders and excesses of the French Revolution. It shows us the comfort of a middle-class girl's life before the upheaval, and convinces us that the old regime interfered but little with the ordinary run of domestic life. Doubtless some of the poorer French folk revolted because of actual physical suffering; but the great mass revolted, like Madame Roland and Lafayette, at the call of an idea, an ideal.

Did this same ideal exist in other lands? Read the autobiography of Alfieri, the great Italian tragic poet. You will find him one of the first to cry out for Italian freedom, for the "united Italy" which a later century has seen achieved. You will find him also the apt successor of Casanova, of Goldoni, or of old Benvenuto Cellini, in depicting the development of Italian civilization, the unity that runs through all the diversity of Italian life and character.

From the British autobiographies of this period, we get quite another view of the ever varying kaleidoscope of humanity. Burns, the national poet of Scotland, may well speak to us for the North Briton of the day, or perhaps for all the British lower classes. These found themselves subjects of some such government as Madame Roland had envisioned, the upper classes assuming control of the nation, recognizing their responsibility to the masses, and protecting and governing them with as much of wisdom and of generosity as nature had implanted in the British aristocrat. It proved an insufficient amount to protect poor Burns. Perhaps he was equally

as much at fault as the system under which he lived; but his autobiographical sketch leaves us with a sad impression of the impossibility of success or happiness ever coming to a genius who had the unwisdom to be born among the British peasantry of the day.

Neither do we get an attractive view of British society from the other chief British self-story of the time. Mrs. Mary Robinson was a successful London actress who became the mistress of the British heir to the throne, afterward King George IV. This prince was the son and successor of the King George who had opposed the American Revolution, and who in his old age had become practically insane, so that the son ruled as regent. Mrs. Robinson assures us that in early youth he was a most charming wooer, and tells a pathetic tale of her early theatrical life, its struggles and abuses, and then of the happiness which seemed to promise with this young true lover—even though his rank prevented him from marrying her. With a womanly note of remorse, widely different from the cheery self-satisfaction of Madame Du Barry in similar case, Mrs. Robinson stops her narrative abruptly just before she accepts the "protection" of Prince George. Its sad continuance we learn from other sources. The royal lover proved himself typical of the profligacy, the selfishness, and the hypocrisy, which disgraced the English life of his day. In an earlier volume we read of the English theatrical life of a previous generation in the narrative of Colley Cibber. He died in the year before Mrs. Robinson was born, so that her story quite fairly carries on from his the picture of the English stage and of the actor's miseries.

There is no British autobiographer born among the wealthier classes to cover this immediate period, though Gibbon's work in the preceding volume and Scott's and Wordsworth's in the next may serve to bridge the gap. We have however some very interesting fragments of self-narrative from the most famous Briton of the day, Admiral Nelson, the naval hero who shares with Drake the eternal worship of his countrymen. Nelson's letters are not likely to lead us to change greatly the view of British social life that we gather from Burns and Mrs. Robinson. England was beginning to fight the French Revolution and Nelson was her most successful fighter, but he was not a

model of the domestic virtues. What Nelson does show us that is well worth appreciation, is the splendid bull-dog courage, the devotion to his work, the daring, the brilliant initiative, which made him the ideal of the British naval service, an ideal that other naval services have since striven to attain and to perpetuate.

One further autobiography of this period has a peculiar interest and value of its own. This is the narrative of Solomon Maimon, a Polish Jew. With Maimon we pass beyond the confines of the fairly well-known world of western Europe and America. He was a peasant and we visit with him the peasant homes of Poland, otherwise unknown. We learn something of the real life, not of a few nobles but of the common masses in that Poland which Russia and Prussia and Austria had then recently seized and divided among them.

No other peasant there but Maimon could have told the story. He was no ordinary man, but a marvel of energy and intellect. He educated himself and asserted his own independence both personal and intellectual. He traveled, and saw much of Europe, and wrote books. By coincidence that earlier, similar traveler, the Danish writer Holberg, died in the year of Maimon's birth. So that the study of Europe's life by the intelligence of strangers here overlaps, as does the picture of theatrical life in Cibber and Mrs. Robinson.

To the general world Maimon was something more important than a self-educated wanderer. He was a thinker, a philosopher. If most of our histories of philosophy give him little credit, it is only because his books have been so little known. A Pole, a Jew, a peasant, was not likely to win much attention or much honor in those days; and Maimon was ignored while other men, more fortunately situated, borrowed from his books and his ideas. His autobiography has long remained as little known as his philosophic books, and only here is it rescued from its almost complete oblivion. Yet some day when the history of our modern intellectual development is recorded in full, the name of Maimon, and perhaps his vigorous, sarcastic, world-defying autobiography also, will be well known and honored among men.

LAFAYETTE

By Lyman P. Powell, D.D., LL.D.

LAFAYETTE has his own place in our earlier national history. He was the only man who ever won the love, unqualified and unstayed, of Washington. Others deserved and received well of the Father of his Country. Hamilton was often like a son to Washington. Greene kept his respect until the end. Governor Trumbull's wisdom he appraised so high that in many a tight place Washington said "Let us ask Brother Jonathan." For the burly Knox and the buxom Mrs. Knox, he always had a smile; and as they drew near him once at a social function he was amusingly reminded of a pair of well-yoked oxen.

But to Lafayette, young, lean, red-headed, hook-nosed, awkward, and easily embarrassed, he gave at the first meeting all his love, and never took it back. He seemed unable to get on a day without him. It was Washington who sought the daily talk with the young Frenchman, and even added to it a long letter written with his own pen and with an abandon dissociated in popular or critical estimation with the habitually reserved Washington.

Others wanted quite as much to make drafts on the young man's time and love. He gave, where and when he could, ever mindful that he had his work to do. His appearance anywhere from Brandywine to Yorktown was the inevitable signal for the outbreak of applause. The Massachusetts man eager to be off for the spring planting and the Virginian concerned for his plantation, forgot everything but the instinctive call to hero worship when Lafayette was near. He was Washington's make-weight for American solidarity, before colonial conceit had given way to national responsibility. Nor was there an abatement of enthusiasm when in 1824, an aged man and crippled, Lafayette revisited the America he had loved and helped to make.

Yet his head was never turned. To the manor born, the

envy later of the coarse Napoleon of whom Talleyrand once said "What a pity such an able man is so ill bred," Lafayette always carried himself like the French nobleman he was, so sure of his position he never had to think of it or point it out.

Indirectly, at least, Lafayette is understandable. He was a real man. He set *right* first in all his planning. At times he had to get on with fools and knaves. The one he tried to suffer gladly for the sake of holding together a combination ever eager to disintegrate. The other he worked with as best he could, and cut no one's acquaintance till he was forced to the conclusion that bare acquaintanceship jeopardized the cause he represented.

Not only did he speak out for the right no matter what it cost him—and twice it cost him dear—but he lived the right as he had the vision to perceive it. When he too heard the shot heard round the world, he had everything to keep him in *la belle France.* He had position, wealth, a lovely family, friends who gave him first place in their thoughts. But, a true democrat, he believed the place of a French nobleman was beyond the seas where democracy was under fire, while too many of his home associates were content to turn fine phrases about liberty.

When early in 1777 he decided to cast in his lot with us, Silas Deane hinted boldly at military honors ready for him in America. But when one hot day the next summer Lafayette appeared before Congress assembled in Philadelphia, he was quick to say: "I ask two favors at your hand; the one is to serve without pay, at my own expense; and the other, that I be allowed to serve at first as a volunteer."

Congress—especially after Lafayette was wounded at Brandywine—wanted to put epaulets on him. Washington, though his affection was already mortgaged to the utmost, observed, reflected, and in about six months advised Congress to give Lafayette a division to command. Congress before Lafayette was twenty-one tried to make him co-ordinate to the chief; but Lafayette saw the underhand of indirectness below the hand of generosity and for love's sake declined the fulsome honor.

Of his record as a soldier there can be no doubt. Even such discriminating and coldly critical judges as Gouverneur Morris and Talleyrand agreed in France a long time afterwards that Lafayette was a great soldier. He won his reputation so

quickly and so easily that the temptation comes to ask in all sincerity if there is not something factitious or fictitious about it. Had he not some expert counselor? Was there not some power behind the throne? If so, the power has not yet been found. Washington and Greene never for a moment raised the question. No historian can name him. Lafayette *was* a great soldier.

He gave his all to the cause he had espoused. It was the sheer outpour of ebullient enthusiasm, impetuous ability, early ripening but sane and sound personality, ingenious, ingenuous, irresistible, that broke down every barrier before him and made him in defense a Verdun rock blazoned with "They shall not pass" upon him. He could not be beaten; because he would not be. His was the will to understand as well as to thrust on. His was the mind to invent as well as analyze. He was never greater than when Valley Forge disclosed nakedness only to send Lafayette at last hurrying back to France to quicken there that public sentiment which brought effectively the lilies of France to our salvation, just as "old glory" led by the same Lafayette spirit has been carried over seas to save France this year in her own hour of peril.

Of his record in the French Revolution it is not so easy to write. Again, chance came his way to serve. More was expected of him than ever in his life before. He seemed marked out for leadership. France was in danger graver far than had beset the thirteen colonies. But Lafayette's service in his middle life at home can never count so high as that of his youth abroad. The reason is not far to seek. It does his reputation no great harm. He was neither a sly politician nor a first grade statesman at a time when both were needful to effective leadership in France.

The situation there was more complicated than it had been here. When a cabal here attempted both to honor and to use him at the expense of Washington, he refused to lend himself to them on any terms. He knew that to deserve less than the best of Washington was to trail his manhood in the dust. The enthusiasms of youth—its outspokenness, its rash but never low endeavor, its mistakes in judgment—Washington was ever ready to forgive whether in a Lafayette or Hamilton. Lafayette kept his wagon hitched to the star he learned to locate

under the early tutelage of his great friend for whom he named his boy. His course here had been made clear for him from the first. In France the way was more tortuous, the problem more complex. There as here he stood ever for the right, but he was always of the small and lone minority. The Jacobins never won his confidence though more than once they tried. The unclassified mass hated him for his good breeding and his sense of justice. The nobility thought him renegade. While in this country, he had had a Washington to whom to look up and for whom to sacrifice, there was in France only a fat-witted, clock-mending king, to whom the only service Lafayette could render at the last was to save him and his queen from mob violence. Even while he helped them they annoyed him with their pettiness and vacillation.

His special handicap was more in evidence in the French Revolution than in ours. He was habitually an optimist. He took people at their face value. He could be used once at least by the underhanded and the maladroit. It seemed next to impossible—even in his fifties—for him to realize that in almost every group there is a "gang" spirit ever eager to control or ruin, that some men prefer the darkness to the light because their ways are dark, that to set a sacred cause before a personal advantage is impossible for some who tread softly and speak low. There was a time when he lost his perspective and enthusiasm and seemed to be a failure even to himself.

In consequence, on one or two occasions when fore-knowledge for the country's good needed to be saturated with exact knowledge of men as they are, he assumed them better than they were, and at the crisis of the game he was not ready with a check to threaten their main pieces. He did not prove himself the politician some wished him to be, but I fancy America —especially to-day fired by the Lafayette love of freedom— cares none the less for Lafayette that he was less a politician than a man and played the game of public welfare in the open, even to the frankest speaking when others whispered and in secret plotted.

He went on loving men until the last. Some—Louis Philippe for instance—he trusted too often and too far. Napoleon had for him a strange fascination. They seemed for a while almost good friends. But the time came when Napo-

leon's meanness and ambition shocked him, and he withdrew into an aristocratic aloofness from which Napoleon's flattery and adroitness never could extract him.

One man never in his words or deeds proved disappointing to our Lafayette. One man recapitulated and visualized for him all his ideals of the good and great. Lafayette is therefore dear to all Americans as Washington is dear to them, and in these days of a newborn affection between the two great republics the song that Lafayette used to sing from Brandywine to Yorktown takes on for us Americans a new meaning: "Fais ce que dois, advienne que pourra." "Do what you ought, let come what may."

VITTORIO ALFIERI

THE APOSTLE OF ITALIAN FREEDOM: THE GREAT TRAGIC POET

1749-1803

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Inveterate hater of tyranny in every form, among the first of poets to hail the independence of the United States in 1776, Alfieri deserves our warmest admiration and interest, aside from the romantic glamour of his life-story. Born an aristocrat, rich, he had little regard for the hosts of kings and nobles that made up his world. His heart bled for the political corruption of his beloved Italy, and turning his eyes to other lands of Europe he saw no relief in sight. Despots were everywhere. Strangely enough, Alfieri failed to realize the effect that the French Revolution would have upon government in general, but that was probably because he entertained throughout his life a deep-seated prejudice against all things Gallic. In his early years of travel we find him visiting one country after another, seeking ever for the light of liberty among the people. England alone gave him some hope of future felicity in political science. Prussia and Frederick the Great he abhorred and anathematized. France and its flaccid monarch sickened him. The potentates of Italy set his soul aflame.

For a long time Alfieri seethed inwardly, without a means of voicing his tumultuous feeling. He thought of writing, but despaired of adequate expression. His bringing-up had given him no knowledge of his native tongue, Italian. Poor French was his best medium of thought. Driven on by his love of liberty, his hatred of the mighty unjust, Alfieri applied himself to the beautiful Tuscan language, the powerful instrument of Dante, and sought its mastery. Then he began work upon a series of tragedies based on classic subjects. Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides were his models, but unlike them he strove to inspire terror more than pity—he must needs rouse a primal, ferocious sentiment against inhuman wrongs. He considered it idle to attempt to regenerate the age with tears of compassion, and resolved *to torment it with the spur of rage.* And he succeeded. In the field of Italian tragedy Alfieri stands without a rival. He wrote almost a score of tragedies, all of

them molded on a grand and awful scale. His five comedies were not important.

To us, his autobiography is the most living thing he left for the coming generations. In it he has depicted himself faithfully. We quote from an introduction he wrote for the work: "Speaking, and much more writing of one's self, spring doubtless from undue self-love. Therefore, I will not preface this life by weak apologies, or false and unsatisfactory reasons, which would not be likely to gain credit with others, or win from the reader a favorable impression of my future veracity. And I frankly confess, although I may have been partially influenced by other motives, that I have been prompted to this undertaking chiefly by my self-love—a gift nature deals out in larger or smaller doses to all men, and in immoderate doses to authors . . . yet I do not intend to allow myself to run on at great length in relating trifles, but to give special attention to those particulars which contribute, when known, to the knowledge of man in general, whose mysteries we can in no way so well understand as by studying ourselves. . . . My object in this work is to illustrate human character, and of what can one speak more intelligently than of himself?"

Alfieri planned to add another and final epoch to his autobiography, his "Old Age," but the hand of death fell upon him before he had reached the sunset hour of life's little day.

THE LIFE OF ALFIERI

PERIOD FIRST—INFANCY, EMBRACING NINE YEARS OF VEGETATION

I WAS born in the city of Asti, in Piedmont, the 17th of January, 1749, of noble, opulent, and respectable parents. I notice these three circumstances as fortunate ones to me for the following reasons. Noble birth was of great service to me in after times, for it enabled me without incurring the imputation of base or invidious motives to disparage nobility for its own sake, to unveil its follies, its abuses, and crimes, while its salutary influence prevented me from ever dishonoring the noble art I professed. Opulence made me free and incorruptible to serve only truth. The integrity of my parents never made me feel ashamed that I was born of noble blood. Had either of these three things been wanting to my birth, it would have lessened the virtue of my works, and I should probably have been either a poorer philosopher, or a worse man.

My father's name was Antonio Alfieri; my mother's Monica Maillard di Tournou. Her descent was Savoyard, as her bar-

barous surnames show, but her ancestors had for a long time been settled in Turin. My father was one of the purest of men. He was bred to no profession, and those who knew him well tell me he was contaminated by no ambition. With a fortune equal to his rank, and moderate in all his desires, he lived sufficiently happy. When he was about fifty-five years old he married my mother, who, although very young, was the widow of the Marquis di Cacherano, a nobleman of Asti. A daughter born two years before me had more than ever inflamed the desires and excited the hopes of my good father for a son. My arrival was therefore hailed with unmeasured joy. I cannot say whether his joy was so great because a son delighted him in his old age, or because he wished to transmit his name to future times, but probably the two passions were equally mingled. However this may have been, I was sent out to nurse in the village of Rovigliasco, two miles from Asti. Almost every day my father came on foot to visit me, for he was a man of patriarchal habits. He was now sixty years of age, and though still hale and vigorous, this constant exertion, reckless as he was of exposure, brought on a fit while he was over-heated, which in a few days terminated his life. I had not then completed my first year.

My mother was left pregnant with another son, who died very young, and there remained then only a son and daughter by my father, and two daughters and one son by my mother's first husband, the Marquis di Cacherano. She was a widow now the second time, but being still young, she passed to her third marriage with the Cavalier Giacinto Alfieri di Magliano, a younger brother of a different branch of our house. This gentleman, by the death of his eldest brother, who left no children, became sole heir to his immense estate.

With him my excellent mother was perfectly happy.

I have preserved no recollections of that stupid infantile vegetation, except of a parental uncle, who used, when I was three or four years old, to make me stand on a large old chest, and give me sugar-plums. But I hardly remember anything about him but his square-toed shoes.

When I was about five years old, I was reduced very low by a severe illness, and I seem to preserve still a dim consciousness of my sufferings. I had no idea what death was; still I

desired to end my pain, for when my younger brother died they said he had become a little angel. After all the pains I have taken to recall my ideas, or rather sensations, before my sixth year, I can recollect nothing else.

On the marriage of our mother, my sister Julia and myself were taken from the paternal roof to live with her in the house of our step-father, who was to us more than a father while we lived there. The eldest son and daughter by the first marriage were successively sent to Turin, one to the college of the Jesuits, and the other to a convent. Soon after my sister Julia was sent to a convent in Asti. I was then in my seventh year.

I was placed under the charge of Don Ivaldi, a good priest, who taught me from spelling and writing up to the fourth class, in which I translated not badly, as the master said, some of the lives of Cornelius Nepos, and the fables of Phædrus. But the good father was himself rather ignorant, as I afterwards discovered, and if they had left me in his hands later than my ninth year, I should probably have learned nothing more. My relations were themselves very ignorant, and often have I heard them repeat the adage so common to the nobles of those times, that a gentleman had no need of being a doctor! I had, however, some natural taste for study, and the departure of my sister, which left me alone with my master, gave me at the same time melancholy and a consecration to study.

Before I go on with my story, I will allude to a singular circumstance in the history of my heart. The privation of the society of my sister left me long sad, and more serious than before. My visits to this beloved girl grew less and less frequent, for my master confined me closely to study, and I could see her only in vacations and holidays, nor always then.

One day during my eighth year while I was in this melancholy state, occasioned partly perhaps by my feeble health, I took occasion when the master and servant were gone out, to leave my room on the first floor, facing a green court-yard, and went out, and began to pull up handfuls of a herb growing there, which I chewed and swallowed with avidity in spite of its harsh and bitter taste. I had heard somebody once say there was a herb called hemlock which poisoned and

caused death. I had never wished to die, nor did I even know what death was; but following some natural instinct, mingled with a grief, the cause of which I did not understand, I went to devouring eagerly this herb, thinking it might be hemlock. But its insufferable bitterness soon nauseated me, and I went back into the garden, unseen by any one, and vomited up all I had eaten. I went back to my room, and remained there silent and alone, tortured with pain in every part of my body.

In the meantime the master returned, but he guessed nothing I had done, nor did I speak of it myself. Soon after we were called to dinner. My mother, seeing my eyes swollen and inflamed as they usually are after the violence of vomiting, insisted with great earnestness to know what was the matter. She was peremptory in her commands; my pains kept increasing so that I could not eat, but I was determined not to speak, and tried my best to conceal my sufferings. But my mother repeated her questions, and began to threaten me. At last, after eyeing me closely, she saw I was really suffering, and perceiving also a green color on my lips, which I had forgotten to wash, she became alarmed, and coming up to me, spoke of the unusual color of my lips and forced me to answer. Overcome with fear and pain, I burst into tears, and confessed it all. Some light remedy was immediately given, and no serious consequence followed. For several days I was punished by confinement, which only administered to my melancholy.

I will now speak of the characteristics I was developing during these first years of budding reason. I was generally silent and tranquil, sometimes loquacious and lively, but always in extremes; obstinate and restive under restraint, but flexible to kindness. I was restrained more by the dread of being scolded than anything else, susceptible to the last degree of mortification, and unbending to force. But I can account more satisfactorily to others and to myself, for these early characteristics nature had stamped on my mind, by relating two or three trivial incidents I remember very well, which will vividly portray my character. Of all the punishments they could inflict on me, the one which cut me deepest, and brought me to a sick bed, and was, therefore, never repeated but once, was to send me to Mass, in a net night-cap which nearly cov-

ered my head. The first time I was condemned to this penance (and I've forgotten the provocation), I was dragged by the hand of my master to the church of Carmine, an immense edifice where generally not more than forty people usually assembled. I was, however, so much cut down by it, that for more than three months I needed no reproof.

But the dreadful effect of this punishment filled up the joy of my parents and master. The abhorred cap was threatened for every shadow of a misdemeanor, and I went to my duty trembling. But having afterwards committed some slight fault, in excuse of which I told a solemn lie to my mother, I was again sentenced to the cap, and instead of the solitary church of Carmine, I was to be taken to that of St. Martino, far from our house, in the most beautiful part of the town, frequented in the middle of the day by all the fashionables of the gay world.

Alas, what agony I suffered! I prayed, and wept, and despaired, but all in vain. That night, which I thought would be the last of my life, I not only did not close my eyes, but I do not think in all my sufferings I ever passed one more dreadful. At last the hour came. Capped, weeping, and roaring, I was dragged by the arm by my master, and pushed along by the servant behind. In this fashion we went through two or three streets without meeting a person, but as soon as we came into the crowded streets near the piazza and church of St. Martino, I stopped weeping, and roaring, and hanging back, and walked on silently and rapidly close by the side of Father Ivaldi, hoping to screen myself under the huge sleeve of the long gowned master. I reached the crowded church, led by the hand like a blind man; and, in fact, I had shut my eyes on the threshold, nor did I open them again till I was kneeling at my place for Mass, and even then I did not raise them enough to see a human being. I was just as blind, too, in going out, and I went home with death in my heart, believing myself dishonored forever. For that day I neither eat, nor spoke, nor studied, nor wept. At last the pain and excitement became so intense, I was sick for many days. But the desperation the cap had worked this time satisfied us all. My mother never said anything more about it, and it was some time too before I told another lie. And who knows but

I owe it to that blessed cap that I afterwards became one of the men of the *fewest* lies I have ever seen!

Another story. My maternal grandmother, a matron of great consideration in Turin, a widow of one of the pompous, self-important men at court, made a visit to Asti, surrounded by all that array and pomp which leave a great impression among the children. She remained some days with my mother, and although she caressed me exceedingly, I had not become very familiar with her, as I was quite a little barbarian. When she came to leave, she told me I must tell her something that would please me most, and I should certainly have it. At first, bashfulness, fear and irresolution, and afterwards obstinacy and peevishness, determined me sullenly to persist in the same answer, *nothing.* Twenty different ways were tried to draw from me something besides that very barbarous *niente,* yet all in vain. They got nothing by all their questionings except the same eternal *niente.* I first repeated the word dry and round, afterwards in a contemptuous and trembling style, at last it came forth with tears and sobs. I was sent away from their presence, as I had richly deserved, and shut up where I could enjoy my so much beloved *niente* all alone; and my grandmother left for Turin.

(1757.) But the same fellow who would fight rather than take a present from his grandmother, had, several days before, stolen a fan from one of her trunks and hid it in his bed, and said (which was true), he had taken it to give to his sister! I paid dear for this theft, and I deserved it well; but although the thief might be a trifle worse than the liar, no allusion was made to the cap—so much greater was my mother's fear of making me sick than seeing me become a little thief; a crime indeed, not to be much feared in my case, and easy to eradicate in one who is not driven to it by want. A desire for the possessions of others springs up and grows very fast in those who have nothing of their own.

My elder brother, the Marquis di Cacherano, who had been studying for several years at the Jesuits' college, in Turin, came to pass a vacation at Asti. He was then fourteen years old, I was eight; and his society was at the same time, to me, a source both of satisfaction and chagrin. We had different fathers, and never having been much together, I felt for him

no particular attachment. As we played together, however, some love for him might have sprung up in time, but he was much older than myself, had more liberty, more money, more caresses from our parents—had seen something more of the world, living at Turin—had read Virgil, and God knows what, and so many other little advantages he had, which I had not, that at last, for the first time, I began to know the feeling of *envy*. This, however, was not so atrocious in me, for I did not hate him exactly; but it excited in me a very strong desire to have the same things he possessed, although I would not have taken them from him. In this consists I think the distinction between the two kinds of envy. In the base mind it degenerates into downright hatred of a superior, with a desire to deprive him of what the envious one cannot possess; while in a noble soul, it goes no farther than emulation, or a desire to equal or surpass the person in question. Oh! how subtle, and almost imperceptible, the difference between the seed of one's virtues and vices!

During this period my paternal uncle, the Cavalier Pelegrino Alfieri, who had been entrusted with the management of my property after the death of my father, returned from his travels in France, Holland and England, and stopped at Asti. He was a man of great shrewdness, and soon saw I should never learn much on that system of education. A few months after he returned to Turin, he wrote to my mother that he was anxious to place me in the academy in that city.

I was put into the coach by main force, by the old steward appointed to take me to my uncle's, at Turin. I finally set out attended with the servant assigned to me for the future. He was a certain Allesandrino, a youth of much sagacity, and of sufficient education for his condition and our country, where to know how to read and write was not then common.

It was early on the morning of a day I do not remember, in the month of July, 1758, when I left my mother's roof. I cried all the first post.

PERIOD SECOND—CHILDHOOD, EMBRACING NINE YEARS OF *in-*EDUCATION

Here I am, then, dashing on post-haste to Turin. When the steward paid the first post, I said a good word for the pos-

tillion, which soon gained for me the heart of the second. And now he was driving on like a thunderbolt, giving me the wink occasionally not to forget him as he chuckled away. The steward was a feeble old man. He had tired himself out telling me silly stories all through the first post, to cheer me up; and he was now sleeping away soundly, and snoring like an ox. The rapid whirl of the coach wheels gave me a pleasure I never experienced before; for in my mother's carriage, where I seldom had a chance of depositing *my* body, we never got up more than quarter of a trot, just enough to kill one; and besides, in a close carriage, one does not enjoy the sight of the horses; while in our Italian calash, one finds himself above the horses, and has a fine view of the country. On we flew from post to post, and I felt as if my heart would burst with the excitement every moment—everything was new and beautiful. We reached Turin an hour or two after midday. It was a glorious day, and the entrance to the city through the Porta Nuova, and the Piazza of St. Carlo, to L'Annunziata, where my uncle lived, all seemed so grand and beautiful—I went almost crazy with excitement. But the evening was none too pleasant. I was in a new house with strange faces about me, without my mother or my master, with an uncle I had seen but once before, and who was less tender and kind than my mother. I passed a night of tears; and I longed once more to fly back to the dear objects I had just abandoned.

But a few days made these novelties familiar. I became so much gayer and wilder than ever, my uncle found he had a little devil in his house, who was turning everything topsy-turvy. For want of a master, my time was thrown away, and instead of waiting till October (as he intended), to place me in the academy, he caged me up there the 1st of August (1758).

At the age then of nine and a half years, I found myself suddenly transported among strangers, separated from my old friends and abandoned to myself; for that system of public education (if we please to call it such) had not the slightest influence over anything but the studies of those boys, and God knows how even this was done. No maxim of morals, no knowledge of life, was ever given to us there. And who

could expect anything better, when the teachers themselves knew nothing of the world, either by theory or practice?

The Academy was a magnificent edifice in the form of a quadrangle, enclosing an immense court-yard. Two sides were occupied by the students, the others by the Royal Theater and the archives of the King. In front of the latter, was the side we occupied, called the second and third apartments; opposite the theater was the first apartment, of which I shall soon speak. The gallery above us, called the third apartment, was devoted to the youngest pupils and inferior scholars. The second gallery on the first floor was devoted to the older scholars, half or a third of whom studied at the University near by; the others were occupied by the military students. Every gallery contained four dormitories, each accommodating eleven young men, over whom a common priest presided, called an assistant, generally a boor in the dress of a clergyman, who received no salary; provided with table and lodgings, for his menial services.

(1759.) Here I was then, imprisoned in the third apartment in the middle chamber, and given over to the guardianship of my servant Andrea. Finding himself master of me, uncontrolled by my mother, uncle, or any other friend, he became an unchained devil, and the fellow tyrannized over me in every domestic affair, to his full satisfaction. The assistant too played a counterpart in all my studies and actions. The day after my entrance, I underwent an examination, and was pronounced well prepared for the fourth class; and three months of close application would place me in the third. I now began to apply myself, and for the first time I felt the salutary influence of emulation in rivaling those older than myself. I passed another examination in November, and was promoted to the third class. Our master was a certain Don Degiovanni, a priest of perhaps less learning than my good Ivaldi, and he had besides much less affection and care for my interests, for he was obliged to attend as well as he could (but in a sad way to be sure), to fifteen or sixteen other pupils.

Here I was an ass among asses, and under an ass for a teacher, but I managed somehow or other to get through Cornelius Nepos, and some of the Eclogues of Virgil.

After passing most of the year 1759 in similar studies, I was promoted in November to a higher class. The master, Don Amatis, was a priest of genius, shrewdness, and learning. Under him I made more rapid progress, and as far as that system of superficial study permitted, I acquired the Latin tongue. I had a rival who often surpassed me in composition exercises, and all my emulation was aroused. I was obliged to yield to him, however, in power of memory, for he would repeat six hundred verses of the Georgics of Virgil at once, without a mistake, while to my great mortification I could scarcely get up to four hundred, and even these I could not do well.

During that entire year my morals were kept pure, unless nature herself, unconsciously to me, was making her way to disturb them. I chanced about this time (and I cannot remember how), to get hold of a copy of the complete works of Ariosto, in four small volumes. I certainly did not buy it, for I had no money. I did not steal it, for I remember very well everything I ever stole. I have an indistinct notion I got it one volume at a time by way of barter from a fellow, for half a chicken they served up to us Sundays. My first Ariosto must thus have cost me a couple of chickens every month. But I am not quite certain of all this, and I regret it the more, for I would give a great deal to know I had first drank at the springs of Poesy at the expense of my stomach, sacrificing to the muses the best morsel we ever had.

During my first two years at the academy, I learned little, and nearly destroyed my health. Our food was bad, and we had not even enough such as it was. We had too many privations, and too little sleep. All this I had been poorly prepared for, by the system of life I had for nine years been accustomed to in the house of my mother. I increased nothing in stature, and grew as slim and pale as a little wax taper. This brought upon me a combination of complaints, among others an eruption of a viscous fetid humor from every part of my head, preceded by such a headache my temples became black, and my skin looked like charcoal, peeling off so frequently it changed entirely.

My paternal uncle, the Cavalier Pellegrino Alfieri, had been

made governor of the city of Cuneo, where he resided eight months in the year, which left me none of my relatives at Turin except my mother's, of the house of Tornon, and a cousin of my father, the Count Benedetto Alfieri. He was first architect to the king, and lived near the royal theater he had designed and executed with elegance and skill. I went to dine with him sometimes, and occasionally for a call; but all this was under the dictation of Andrea, who ruled me like a despot, under pretense always of acting under the orders of my uncle at Cuneo.

No one of my relations now seemed to borrow any solicitude about my advancement, and I went on wasting the most beautiful years of my life. I made little or no progress in study, and every day my health grew worse. Besides a feeble constitution, I was affected with sores which made me the laughing-stock of my companions, who applied to me the very polite title of the *carrion,* while the more spirited and humane added still the epithet *rotten.* This state of health induced a malignant melancholy, and a love of solitude thus became every day more deeply rooted in my nature.

But in the year 1760 I entered rhetoric, although I could only now and then glance at my books; but very little study was necessary for those classes. The professor of rhetoric was decidedly inferior to my last. He explained to us the Æneid, and made us write Latin verses; but it appeared to me I was, on the whole, losing ground in the Latin tongue. And as I was not the last among my school-fellows, I infer that the same must have been true of them.

In that year of pretended rhetoric, I succeeded in recovering my little Ariosto. I got it by stealth, one volume at a time, from the under prior, who had placed it on one of the shelves of his library.

During those long and frequent intervals in which I was confined by illness, one of my schoolmates, who was older and stronger, and even more stupid than myself, used to get me to write his compositions, translations, paraphrases, and verses. The arguments he resorted to were really beautiful. "If you will write my composition, I will give you two playing balls—here they are, well made, four colors, beautiful cloth, and very elastic. And," he continued, "if you won't write it, I'll

give you two knocks on the head," and suiting the action to the word he raised his powerful fist over me. I thought it best to take the two balls and write his composition.

(1761.) In such puerile, juvenile vicissitudes, often infirm, and always in bad health, I consumed that year of rhetoric. I passed the usual examination, and found myself prepared for philosophy. Twice a day our lectures called us from the Academy to the University near by. The morning lesson was in geometry, the afternoon was devoted to philosophy, or logic. Here I was then, scarcely thirteen years old, conceited into a philosopher. The very name made me proud, for it brought me into the second class, and secured the delightful privilege of leaving the academy twice a day, when I took a ramble by stealth through the town under the pretense of necessity.

Although I was the smallest of all my companions in the second apartment, yet my inferiority of stature, of age, and of strength, imparted to me just in inverse proportion an ambition to distinguish myself. And at first I studied enough to distinguish myself at the recitations, conducted in the evening by our academical ushers. I answered the questions as well as the rest, and sometimes better, but this was the simple result of a good memory, for to tell the truth I understood nothing of that pedantic philosophy, insipid in itself, and concealed under the Latin I was still struggling with, and conquering as well as I could by mere force of the dictionary.

(1762.) In the winter of 1762, my uncle, the governor of Cuneo, passed some months at Turin. He saw the feebleness of my health, and obtained for me some indulgences, *i. e.* something better to eat, or rather something more healthy. This, joined to a little more relaxation, consequent upon leaving the house every day to go to the University, and my uncle's good dinners during the vacation, with my periodical nap of three-quarters of an hour in the school, all combined to restore my strength, and my form began to develop and grow.

My uncle and tutor thought it best my sister Julia should be taken from the convent of S. Anastasio in Asti, where she had been more than seven years under an aunt (the widow of the Marquis Trotti), who had retired there herself; and be

placed in the convent of S. Croce at Turin. Little Julia had won absolute sway over this good aunt, who loved her so well, she had almost ruined her, by utterly neglecting her education. She was now nearly fifteen, two years older than myself. In Italy this is the age of dawning passion, when the tender and inexperienced heart yields to the first impulse of love. A little passion of hers, such as could find place in a convent, had displeased our uncle (although the match would have been a good one), and determined him to bring her to Turin, and confide her to the care of a maternal aunt, a nun of S. Croce.

The sight of this sister whom I once so tenderly loved now grown into such beauty, drove away my sadness and nearly restored my health. Her society, or rather a sight of her now and then, made me still happier, for it consoled her in this trial of her heart, on being so suddenly torn away from her lover, whom she so resolutely determined to marry. Andrea allowed me to visit her every Sunday and Thursday, our only holidays, and often did I pass that whole hour weeping with her at the grate; but those meetings of tears, sad as they were, lightened my heart, and I went homeward less sad although I was never cheerful. Like a philosopher (as I was this year), I tried to inspire her to persist in her choice, since she would at last overcome the resolution of my uncle. But time, which sways so magically the stoutest hearts, is not slow in changing a girl's. Absence from her lover, opposition encountered, diversions and changes with all the excitements of a new and more cheerful life, finally dispelled her sadness and restored her spirits again.

I had now finished my first year in the university; the ushers reported to my uncle (and I cannot tell why), that I had studied with extreme assiduity; and he invited me to pass the month of August with him at Cuneo. This little trip from Turin to Cuneo through the rich smiling plain of beautiful Piedmont, was the second I ever had taken; it delighted me exceedingly and improved my health, for fresh air and exercise have always been to me the elements of life.

During this short stay in Cuneo I wrote my first sonnet. I will not, however, call it mine, for it was a concoction of lines either taken entire, or garbled and strung together from

Metastasio and Ariosto, the only Italian poets I had ever read. But I believe there was little rhyme or rhythm about them—for although I had made Latin verses, Hexameter and Pentameter, no one had ever taught me a single rule of Italian verse. I have racked my brain to recall this sonnet—but I cannot remember a line. I only knew it was inspired by, and written in praise of a lady my uncle loved, with whom I was also pleased. This sonnet must have been a sad affair, without doubt, but it was highly praised by the lady herself, who knew nothing about poetry, and by others like her—so I believed myself a poet. But my uncle, who was an austere soldier, although sufficiently intelligent about historical and political affairs, neither knew nor cared anything about poetry, and so far from encouraging my budding muse, he disapproved the lines, and ridiculed me for writing them. This dried up my little poetical vein to the fountain; I had no more inclination to play the poet after this, nor did I write another line till I was five-and-twenty. How many good or bad verses that uncle of mine crushed with that miserable first-born sonnet!

At the close of the year 1762, I entered upon the study of civil and canon Law, a course which in four years brings the scholar to the summit of glory—a laureate! After some weeks, however, of legal study, I relapsed into the same malady which had afflicted me two years before, a universal eruption of the skin in every part of the cranium, and it was doubly severe this time. O! how my poor head revolted from those jumbles of definitions, digests, and similar stuff of both departments of law. I can only compare the condition of my head to the parched earth, which opens in every direction to be healed up by the grateful rain. From these eruptions issued in large quantities a viscous humor, to such a degree that this time I could not save my hair from the odious scissors. A month rid me of that horrible disease, but left me shaved and periwiged. This was one of the most grievous affairs I have ever suffered, in all my life; both on account of the loss of my hair, and the deadly acquisition of the wig, which became the laughing-stock of my petulant companions. I began by openly defending my wig. But I soon saw that in trying to save it I was more likely to lose my head, and I

changed my tactics, and assumed the most brisk part in the attack. I snatched the poor wig before some one else did the job, and swung it high in the air, venting upon it the greatest vituperation. In a few days the public indignation was exhausted. I escaped all further persecution, and I could say I carried the most respectable wig in the hall. I thus learned how much better it is to appear to yield voluntarily what we cannot help being wrung from us by force.

This year I took lessons in geography, and tried to practice the harp. The former I liked. I was fond of globes and charts, and I made some progress also in the study of ancient history. My master, who was from La Val d'Aosta, lent me various books in French, which I was now beginning to understand—among others a Gil Blas, which completely enchanted me. It was the first book I had ever read from beginning to end, except the Æneid of Caro, and I liked it a great deal better. I now plunged into romances, and read them by the score, as Cassander, Almachilde, and the most tragic and the most sentimental gave me equal delight. Among others, "Les Mémoires d'un homme de qualité," I read at least ten times.

As to my harp, although I had an unbounded passion for music, and had some taste for it, yet I made little progress, except in the mechanical part. Written music I could never get into my head, it was all ear and memory. This I attribute, however, very much to the hour I took my lesson, immediately after dinner—a time which all through my life I have found utterly unpropitious for any kind of intellectual exertion, even simple application of the eyes to paper, or any object whatever. The notes, with their five parallel lines, blurred my eyes, and after rising from a lesson of an hour, I could scarcely see, and was ill and stupid the rest of the day.

In fencing and dancing I made no more progress. I was absolutely too weak to support myself in the fencing attitudes, and besides the lesson came after dinner, and often I left the harp to take up the sword. As for dancing, I always abhorred it, and what made it the more insufferable the master was a Frenchman, fresh from Paris. Two other things on a parallel with this made me decidedly anti-Gallic, even from childhood. The first was a sight of the ladies in the suite of the Duchess of Parma (who was born in France),

when she passed through Asti in going or coming from Paris. They were all bedaubed with that odious *rouge* which the French then used exclusively. It struck my boyish fancy as very singular, for I had never seen it before, and I often spoke of it for several years. I could not comprehend the design of an ornament so whimsical, so ridiculous, so opposed to the nature of things. For when sickness, or drunkenness, or any other cause gives to the face this disgusting redness, everybody who can conceals it, or shows it only to excite laughter or pity. These French *affectations* left upon my mind a deep and lasting impression of disgust and horror against the female part of that nation.

The other vein of contempt had its origin many years after, when I was studying geography. The map showed the vast difference, in extent and population, between England or Prussia and France; and hearing it said, as the news of the war reached us, that France was beaten by land and sea, united with the recollection of the early stories told me, that the French had often been masters of Asti, and finally had been made prisoners, to the number of six or seven thousand, as cowards, without lifting a finger in defense, after having as usual carried themselves so arrogantly and tyrannically; all these different particulars uniting, and being reflected from the face of this French dancing-master, all combined to root deeply in my heart a mixture of abhorrence and disgust for that fastidious nation. And really, whoever will search, in his maturity, for the radical causes of his likes and dislikes for individuals or nations, will find, perhaps, in his infancy, the germ of all such feelings, and not less curious or absurd than I have myself exposed. Oh! what a little thing man is!

At the age of fourteen, the laws of Piedmont emancipate the ward from his guardian, and place him under a curator, who leaves him master of his annual income, and can only prevent him from alienating his real estate. This new independence at the age of fourteen, inflamed my fancy, and I began to build my air-castles.

My governor, Andrea, was very properly dismissed by my guardian, for he had abandoned himself without restraint to libertinism, to wine and quarrels, and had become a finished scoundrel; for he had nothing to do, and no one to watch

him. He had always treated me insolently, and when he was intoxicated, which was four or five days in the week, he even used to beat me. During my frequent illness, after seeing me at dinner, he used to go off and leave me shut up in my room till supper time, which contributed more than anything else to impede my progress to health, and increase the horrible melancholy of my constitution. And yet who would believe I wept several weeks for the loss of the fellow? For many months I used to visit him every Thursday and Sunday, for he was prohibited from setting his foot over the threshold of the academy. I made my new servant attend me during these visits. He was a rude but good fellow. For a long time I gave Andrea all my allowance of money. At last he found employment; time and change of scene banished him from my recollection. In seeking for a solution of the strange problem, why I cherished an affection so unreasonable for so profligate a fellow, I should say, if I wished to embellish my story, that it sprang from the natural generosity of my disposition. But this was not really the cause, although soon after, when, in reading Plutarch, I began to be inflamed with the love of glory and virtue, I prized and practiced, as far as I could, the divine art of rendering good for evil. My affection for Andrea, who had inflicted upon me so many abuses, proceeded partly from being with him seven years, and partly from his own good qualities, his quickness of conception, his great dexterity and agility of action, and the long stories and romantic tales he used to tell me, so full of wit, feeling, and imagination; all these combined to ingratiate him in my favor again, very soon after I had recovered from the effect of his abuse and vexations. But, after all, I cannot understand how one who abhorred so much by nature as myself being teased and tormented, could ever have borne his yoke. This reflection has often since made me pity those princes who, without being imbecile, allow themselves to be controlled by those who won an ascendancy over them in their youth, for it is a fatal age for receiving lasting impressions.

I was now my own master, and as soon as I got possession of my fortune I found friends and companions by the score, and flatterers too; in a word all that comes and goes with money. Into the midst of this new and whirling vortex I was

thrown before I was fifteen; but I did not become so dissipated and foolish as might easily have been expected. From time to time I felt some silent impulses to study, and a kind of horror and shame at the thought of my ignorance, in which I could not deceive myself, nor attempt to deceive others. But destitute of any solid basis of education—without a guide—understanding no language well, I knew not what to apply myself to, nor how I should go to work. Reading a host of French romances (for we have few readable ones in Italian), continual conversation with foreigners, with no opportunity of learning or speaking Italian; at last put to flight the little stock of Tuscan I had picked up during the two or three years of buffoon studies at Humanity and donkey Rhetoric. My empty head was so completely filled with French, that in a fit of study which came over me for two or three months this year, I plunged into the thirty-six volumes of Fleury's Ecclesiastical History, which I read through on the jump.

(1764.) No one now interfered in my affairs except the new servant placed over me by my curator, but he was a semi-governor, and had orders to attend me wherever I went. But the truth was he did not know any too much, and was so fond of money, that by giving him his price I did my own pleasure, and he never interfered with me.

I was at the same time less restricted in my expenditures—no one could now legally control me. The first use I made of this liberty was to buy a horse, which I took with me to the villa of Cumiana. He was a beautiful Sardinian, with a white mane and marked points, particularly the head, neck and breast. I was deeply attached to him, and never think of him without emotion. My attachment for him went so far as to destroy my peace every time he had the least ailment, as he often had, for he was fiery and delicate. I could neither eat nor sleep, but when I mounted him my love for him did not prevent me from fretting and chafing him whenever he did not wish to go my way. The delicacy of this precious animal furnished me a good pretext for getting another, and after that a span for the carriage, one for a gig, and two others for the saddle, so that in less than a year I got up as high as eight, amidst the groans of the

penurious curator, whom I left to sing such tunes as he liked best.

Having now passed the bounds prescribed by the parsimony of my curator, I became rather prodigal, particularly in dress. Some of my English comrades were extravagant, and not wishing to be outdone, I even outstripped them.

(1765.) During a *villeggiatura*[1] of a month I passed in the family of two brothers, who were my particular friends and riding companions, I fell for the first time under the power of love. The enchantress was one of their sisters-in-law, the wife of their eldest brother. This Signorina was a vivacious, coquettish brunette. This passion which I experienced afterwards for others so long under all its vicissitudes, made itself known by the following symptoms. I felt a deep and malignant melancholy—I sought the loved object, and yet scarcely was she found, before I flew from her again; I knew not what to say to her, if by chance I found myself with her a few moments, I will not say alone, for she was too closely watched ever to allow of this—but apart by herself. After our return from the villa, I spent whole days in racing through every angle and corner of the city, and in the public promenades of Valentino and Cittadella, hoping to catch a glimpse of her. I could not listen to her name or call it myself—and in a single word, I experienced more than all the passions so inimitably drawn by our divine Master of Love, Petrarch—Passions which few comprehend, and fewer still experience; but to these few alone is it granted to soar above the vulgar crowd.

This my first flame, although it was attended by no serious consequences, burned for a long time in my heart, and in all my subsequent wanderings there silently attended me as the guide of all my undertakings, something which seemed like a voice speaking in the secret of my soul, to say, "If you acquire this or that object you will be able, on your return, better to accomplish your desire, and in the changes time brings you may yet turn this shadow into a substance."

In the autumn of 1765, I made a trip with my curator to Genoa, and it was the first time I had left my native State. The sight of the sea ravished my soul, and I never could sat-

[1] The Italian word for the life of the country villa.

isfy myself with gazing on it. The magnificent and picturesque site of that superb city inflamed my fancy, and had I then known any language well and had some of the poets at hand, I should certainly have written verses. But for two years I had rarely opened a book, except some of the French romances and the delightful prose of Voltaire.

On my way to Genoa I had the pleasure of seeing my mother and native city once more; I had been gone seven years, which at that period seemed so many centuries. After getting back from Genoa, I thought I had achieved some great exploit. But however much I secretly prided myself over my friends out of the academy, I never boasted of it to my companions within, but alluded to it as a small affair. I knew they would esteem it such; for they had all come from distant countries, being English, Germans, Poles, Russians, etc. But this gave me a crazy passion for traveling, and seeing all their countries.

(1766.) In idleness and dissipation the last eighteen months of my first apartment passed quickly away. When I entered the academy, I had inscribed my name in the list of applicants for the army. After three years I was included in a general promotion of perhaps one hundred and fifty others. My military ardor had cooled off very much to be sure, but as I had not withdrawn my application, I had to accept an ensign's commission in the provincial regiment of Asti. I had applied for admission into the cavalry, for I was fond of horses—but I afterwards chose a provincial regiment, which in time of peace would for a few days only call me to my post once or twice a year, thus leaving me greater liberty and nothing at all to do, which happened to be the very thing I was bent upon. But this military life of only a few days disgusted me, and besides it obliged me to leave the academy where I was contented now to remain.

In the following May, then, I left the academy where I had been nearly eight years. In September I attended the first review of my regiment at Asti, where I performed every duty of my little station with the greatest exactness and reluctance—for I could not bow to the yoke of subordination, which, although it be the soul of military discipline, could never be the soul of a future tragic poet. When I left the

academy, I hired a small but pleasant apartment, in the house with my sister, and spent a good deal of money for horses and superfluities of every kind, in giving dinners to my friends and old companions of the academy.

The mania for traveling increased upon me immeasurably by continual intercourse with these foreigners, and I was induced against my natural disposition to weave up a plot to get leave of absence for traveling to Rome and Naples for at least a year. And as it was perfectly certain that at the age of seventeen I should not be allowed to go alone, I agreed with an English tutor (a Catholic), who was to accompany a Fleming and Hollander in this expedition, and with whom I had passed more than a year in the academy, to allow me to join the company. I arranged everything with the parties, and availed myself of my brother-in-law's service to obtain from the king liberty of traveling under the supervision of this Englishman, who was a man well advanced in life, and of an excellent reputation. We fixed upon the first of October of the same year, for our departure.

This was the first plot I ever was guilty of, but in no other way could I win over the tutor, my brother-in-law, and above all the stingy curator. The thing was finally accomplished, but I was ashamed and chagrined at all the turnings, simulations and dissimulations, I had to resort to, to insure success. The king, who, in our little country, meddles in every little affair, had no idea of his nobles traveling abroad, and much less a boy who had scarcely left his nest, and who had shown he had his own way of thinking. I was obliged, in a single word, to bow down pretty low—but thanks to my good fortune, this did not hinder me afterwards from rising up again.

I shall here bring this Second Epoch to a close; I am well aware I have made it even more insipid in its details than the First. But the reader had better spend little time on it or skip it entirely—for to bring the whole thing into two words these eight years of my Childhood were made up of Sickness, Idleness and Ignorance.

PERIOD THIRD—YOUTH, EMBRACING TEN YEARS OF TRAVELING AND DISSIPATION

(1766.) On the morning of the 4th of October, 1766, after passing the whole night in gay fancies without shutting my eyes, with indescribable transport I set out on this longed-for journey. We made a carriage load of four gentlemen with two servants on the box, and a coach with two others behind us, while my valet rode on horseback as a courier. But the latter was by no means that old fellow who had acted as my aid three years before; I had left him in Turin. Francesco Elia, my new servant, had been nearly twenty years with my uncle, and after his death in Sardinia had entered my service. He had already attended my uncle twice to Sardinia and in his travels through France, England, and Holland. He was a shrewd and uncommonly active man; and as he was worth more than all the other four servants taken in a batch, he may henceforth be considered the presiding hero of my comedy of travels. He soon became our only pilot, for the rest of us were all either babies or old dotards.

Our first stop was at Milan, where we stayed fifteen days. I had already visited Genoa. I was familiar with the beautiful site of Turin, and the Milanese scenery could not be expected to please me. Those things I ought to have seen I glanced at hastily, or did not see at all, for I was utterly ignorant and insensible to every beautiful art. I remember that the librarian of the Ambrosian Library put into my hand a Manuscript of Petrarch, and I, like a barbarian, threw it down, saying, *I cared nothing about it.*

After a visit of two weeks we left Milan. The silly journal I kept, I had the good sense soon after to burn. I will not recapitulate many of the incidents of these puerile travels. They were through countries already well known. I shall pass rapidly over the different cities I went through like an insensible Vandal, and go on speaking of myself, for how unhappy the theme may be, it is the one I have chosen for this work.

Via Piacenza, Parma, and Modena, in a few days we reached Bologna. We stopped at Parma only a day, and Modena but a few hours, and of course I saw nothing worth

seeing as I ought to have done. In fact, the only pleasure I had in this journey was in dashing furiously along the roads, occasionally mounting my servant's horse to play the courier. Bologna with its porticos, monks, and pictures, seemed unworthy of my attention. I was urged by a restless impatience I could not control, and I spurred the poor old tutor to hurry on to the end of the journey.

We reached Florence towards the close of October. It was the first city that pleased me after leaving Turin, and I even liked Florence less than Genoa. We remained there a month.

Among so many juvenile follies of which I shall eternally be ashamed, I will not enumerate as the *least* certainly, the giving up my time for a month in Florence to a pedagogue to try to learn English instead of learning from the living Tuscans to speak at least, without barbarism, in their divine tongue. I mangled it so wretchedly that through sheer shame I avoided taking an Italian word on my tongue. But shame was not so strong as my repugnance to study. I was, however, broken of the horrible Lombard and French *u*. It had always disgusted me, for it brings a grimace upon the face like that of a monkey trying to talk. And although I have been in France more than five years, and my ears are absolutely lined with it, yet it makes me laugh every time I hear it, especially at the theater where one is reminded (particularly in the word *nature),* of a person contracting his lips to blow hot soup.

At length with a beating heart I turned my face towards Rome. At night I could not sleep, and all day I was thinking to myself of St. Peter's, the Coliseum, and the Pantheon I had heard so much of before. In my boyhood I had never read any history but that of Rome, and its bright scrolls were now floating confusedly over my recollection. At last, in the month of December, 1766, I saw the longed-for Gate of the People. The wretchedness and misery of the country from Viterbo was all atoned for by that superb entrance, which stirred all my feelings. We entered the city, and stopped in the *"Piazza di Spagna,"* where we were to lodge. Instantly I and my two companions abandoned the tutor to his repose, and went running about the city for the rest of the day, tak-

ing the Pantheon in our way. My companions were even more astonished than myself at what we saw. Some years after I visited their countries, and then I was able easily to account for it.

We stayed only eight days in Rome, but every moment was spent in running about to quench that first impatient curiosity. As for myself I chose rather to visit St. Peter's twice a day than to see new things. That admirable union of sublime objects did not strike me at first as I had expected, but my admiration was continually increasing. But I neither understood nor appreciated that great City in all its grandeur till many years after, when, tired out with tawdry magnificence beyond the Alps, I came back to live in Rome.

The approaching winter now spurred us all on, and I spurred on still more the tardy tutor to set out for Naples, where we intended to pass the entire Carnival. We traveled by vettura, for the roads from Rome to Naples were almost impassable, and Elia had fallen from his horse at Radicofani and broken an arm, which obliged him to ride in our carriage, although he suffered severely by its motion. He had displayed much presence of mind and real fortitude in that accident, for he got up by himself, took his horse by the rein, and set out on foot alone to Radicofani, more than a mile off. There he called a surgeon, and while waiting for him he tore off his coat sleeve and examined his arm. Finding it broken, he held it as firmly as he could, and with the other hand set it so perfectly that the surgeon, who happened to come in just as we arrived with the carriage, did nothing but bind it up, and in less than an hour we were again on the road with the maimed man disposed in a corner of the carriage. His countenance was very firm and unwavering, but he suffered intensely.

We reached Naples the second Christmas holiday, and the weather was like spring. The entrance by the *"Capo di China,"* by the *"Studii e Tolido,"* gave us a sight of the most grand and beautiful city I had ever seen, and its recollection I shall never forget. But I was treated to quite a different prospect at my quarters in a tavern, which stood in one of the dark and filthy lanes of the city, for here we were driven by necessity, as every good hotel was crowded with

foreigners. This misfortune greatly embittered my visit to Naples, for a pleasant or disagreeable location has always had an irresistible influence upon my weak brain, even till my more advanced age.

In a few days our minister introduced me to several families. Not only the public spectacles, but the numerous private balls and fêtes, with all their variety of luxurious diversions, made this Carnival far more brilliant and delightful than any I had ever passed at Turin.

On being presented at court, I found King Ferdinand IV., who was about fifteen or sixteen years old, looking just like the other three sovereigns I had then seen, who were my excellent King Carlo Emanuele, a venerable old man, the Duke of Modena, Governor of Milan, and Leopold, the Grand Duke of Tuscany himself, also very young. I now discovered very clearly that among all the princes there is only one face, and all their courts are only the same antechamber. During my stay at Naples I availed myself of the influence of the Sardinian Minister for obtaining permission to leave my tutor and continue my journey alone. We lived in perfect harmony, and the tutor was kind to us all, yet in all our trips from one city to another we were obliged to combine our movements to accommodate each other, and as the old man was always irresolute, changeable, and tardy, that dependence became very irksome. Indeed I knew not what I wanted. I blindly obeyed a nature I neither knew nor studied, and it was only many years after that I discovered my unhappiness consisted in the want, nay the necessity of having at the same time my heart occupied by a worthy love, and my mind by some noble work. For whenever I have lacked either of these two things I have found myself incapable of the other, and I have remained satiated and filled with chagrin.

Through means of the Count Rivera, I laid and succeeded in my third plot, at the paternal court of Turin; obtaining permission for a second year of traveling, in which I designed to visit France, England, and Holland—names which sounded wonder and delight to my inexperienced years. My third plot succeeded, and I found myself at full liberty for the year 1768 to roam the world.

At last I reached Venice. For a few days the novelty of the

city filled me with wonder, and I was delighted even with the jargon of the people, for I had been familiar with the comedies of Goldoni from boyhood, and in fact the Venetian dialect is pleasing, and only wants majesty. The crowds of foreigners, the number of theaters, and the numerous fêtes and entertainments (besides those usually given at every fair of Ascension) which were made that year to the Duke of Wirtenberg, and among others the sumptuous regatta, all held me in Venice till the middle of June, although they did not keep me contented. My usual melancholy, my restlessness and vexation at keeping still began once more their cruel bites, which embittered all the pleasure the novelty of the scenes around me were calculated to awaken. I passed many days entirely alone, without going out of the house; doing nothing but stand at the window to catch glances and hold short dialogues with a Signorina who lodged opposite. The rest of the long day I passed either sleeping or ruminating on I know not what, and very often weeping—I know not why, without finding peace, or investigating, or even speculating on the cause of my sadness. Many years after I became convinced this was a periodical attack I suffer every spring between April and June, more or less lasting and severe, as my mind and heart are more or less vacant. I afterwards observed too, that my mind was an excellent barometer, for my genius and capacity for composing depended on the weight of the air. A total stupidity always comes over me in the equinoctial and solstitial seasons. I have infinitely less clearness of intellect in the evening than in the morning, and far more fancy, enthusiasm and power of invention in mid-winter and mid-summer than any other period. This susceptibility, more or less common, I believe, to all men of nervous temperament, has destroyed much of the pride I may have sometimes had in the little I have done well, while it has diminished the shame I should have otherwise felt in so much more that I have certainly done badly, particularly in my own art, for I am perfectly convinced that at these different times I could not have done otherwise.

My visit to Venice was on the whole a source of little satisfaction and less utility—I was spurred on by an anxiety to cross the Alps, and I saw not even a tenth part of the won-

ders of painting, architecture and sculpture clustered in that city.

I finally left by sea in a felucca for Antibo, and it seemed to me I was going to the Indies. I had never been but a few miles from the coast; but a favorable wind springing up we pushed out some distance to sea, and by degrees it increased to such a gale we were obliged, to avoid danger, to put into the port of Savona and wait two days for good weather. This detention annoyed so exceedingly I never left the house even to visit the celebrated Madonna of Savona; I wanted neither to see nor hear anything more of Italy; and every moment of detention seemed a robbery of the pleasures I was to enjoy in France. All this was the fruit of an unrestrained fancy which always exaggerated all the good and all the evil of the future, so that both, particularly the former, seemed nothing when I experienced it.

In landing at Antibo, it was a comfort to hear another language, to see other customs, other buildings, and new faces; and although these objects were all inferior to what I had left, yet they afforded me relief by their novelty. I immediately left for Toulon. This city I didn't like, and I shot through it in my rush to Marseilles, whose cheerful aspect, new, well laid out, clean streets, beautiful *corso,* beautiful harbor, graceful, lively women, all delighted me so much, I determined to stop a month, to escape the inconvenience of traveling in the excessive heat of July. In my hotel there was a *table d'Hôte,* where I found company at dinner and supper, without being obliged to talk myself (something which always costs me an effort). And besides, my taciturnity, springing from a bashfulness I never could overcome, was redoubled by the incessant garrulity of French officers and merchants, of whom I found there every species. I contracted no friendship or familiarity with any of them, but I listened very willingly, although I could learn nothing; but to listen never cost me an effort. I could tolerate even the conversations of fools, from whom we learn what they tell us not.

One reason why I had always wanted to go to France was to become familiar with their drama. I had, two years before, heard a company of French Comedians all one summer, which made me familiar with many of their principal tragedies, and

nearly all their most celebrated comedies. I owe it to truth, however, to say, that neither at Turin nor in France, during my first or my second tour, two years after, did the idea occur to me that I should ever write a dramatic composition. I listened to the performances of others without the faintest intention or impulse to write myself. On the whole, Comedy charmed me far more than Tragedy, although by nature I was more inclined to tears than smiles. The tragedies I liked best were *"La Phédre," "L'Alzine," "Le Mahomet,"* and a few others.

Another of my daily diversions at Marseilles was bathing at evening in the sea. I found a delightful place on a point of land on the right of the harbor, where, seated in the sand, with my back against a rock that rose so far behind me as to cut off all sight from the shore on all sides, I could see nothing but the sky and the sea, and thus, between those two immensities, made gorgeous by the rays of the sun, I passed an hour in delicious reveries. Here, too, I should have written rhymes by the quantity, had I known how to write, in any language, either prose or verse.

But I got tired of my sojourn in Marseilles, for everything soon becomes wearisome to the indolent, and I was spurred on more furiously than ever to reach Paris. I left the 10th of August, and, more like a fugitive than a traveler, I pressed on night and day, without stopping till I reached Lyons. Aix, with its magnificent and cheerful walks; Avignon, once the Papal See, and the tomb of the beautiful Laura; Vaucluse, so long the home of the divine Petrarch, nothing could stop me in my thunderbolt rush to Paris. In Lyons my fatigue arrested me for two nights and one day, but setting out again with the same hot haste, less than three days, by the way of Bourgogne, brought me to Paris.

On a cold, cloudy, rainy morning of a day I have forgotten, between the 15th and 20th of August, I entered Paris through the squalid suburb of St. Marcellus. I had exchanged the beautiful skies of Italy and Provence for this dreadful climate. When I entered the vile suburb of St. Germaine, where I had taken lodgings, it seemed I was going into a filthy sepulcher, and I never, in all my life, was overshadowed by a more sepulchral feeling. Why had I passed through such

anxiety, wild illusions of heated fancy, to plunge myself into that fetid sink? In getting out at the hotel, I thought I found myself *completely* undeceived; and had it not been for my fatigue and the disgrace of doing it, I should immediately have abandoned Paris. But it was only when I began to wander around the city that the work was done. The contemptible barbarity of the buildings; the miserable ostentation of a few houses they pretend are palaces; the sluttishness and Gothicism of the churches; the Vandalic architecture of the theaters *then* standing, and the objects without end, disgusting and disagreeable, that all day were falling under my eye, and beyond measure the most intolerable of all, the bedaubed faces of ugly women, were unatoned for by the beauty and variety of the gardens, the elegance of public walks, the good taste and number of beautiful carriages, the lofty façade of the Louvre, and other pleasing objects of this description.

(1768.) Before I set out for London the ambassador proposed to present me at court at Versailles, and I accepted, for I had some curiosity to see the most brilliant court in Europe, that I might be entirely undeceived upon everything. It was New Year's day of 1768, the most interesting occasion in the year. Although I was aware the king never conversed with common foreigners, and such a privation might be of little consequence to me, yet I could not swallow the Jove-like behavior of that monarch. Louis XV. inspected every man presented to him from head to foot, but never gave a sign of receiving any impression whatever. If on presenting an ant to a giant, one should say, "Behold I present you an ant, Monsieur," one would expect that the giant would at least look at it, and either smile, or perhaps say, "Oh! what a very *petite animal,*" or if he chose to keep silence, let his countenance speak for him. But that disdainful look did not affect me very seriously, for a few moments after, I saw his majesty was wasting the same eye-sight on others much more important than myself.

I left Paris in the middle of January with a fellow-countryman. He was a young cavalier of fine address, and some ten years older than I. He was gifted with some genius, but ignorant as I, less reflective, and more a lover of the gay world

than a knower or student of men. He was cousin to our ambassador at Paris, and nephew of the Prince Masserano, then ambassador of Spain at London, and in whose house he expected to lodge. I was not very fond of binding myself to companions, yet we were both going to the same place, and I willingly consented. He was lively and loquacious, and with reciprocal satisfaction I held my tongue, and listened while he talked and boasted. He recounted all his triumphs with the women with great pomp and satisfaction, while I listened without the slightest envy. Evenings at the hotels, while waiting for supper, we played chess, and he always beat me, for during my whole life I have been a dull gamester. We made a long route through *Lisle, Douai, St. Omére,* in getting to *Calais,* and the cold was so excessive that in a close carriage, one night, where a candle was kept burning, our bread and wine were frozen; but this excessive cold was very agreeable, for I never liked to do things by halves.

Leaving the coast of France, we landed at Dover, where the cold was diminished one half, and hardly a flake of snow fell in going up to London. Just in proportion as I had been displeased with Paris at first sight, was I delighted with England, and particularly London. The roads, the inns, the houses, the women, the universal prosperity, the life and activity of that Island, the cleanliness and comfort of the houses, although very small, the absence of beggars, the constant circulation of money, and the industry which equally pervades the capital and the provinces; all these substantial and solid advantages, so peculiar to that free and happy country, enraptured my mind at first sight, and during two subsequent visits I never had occasion to change my opinion. The difference between England and the rest of Europe, in all these aspects of public prosperity, is entirely in her favor, and springs from her excellent government. Although I did not, at that time, study the constitution, the origin of so much prosperity, I understood enough of it to observe and appreciate its good results.

In London a stranger is more easily introduced into society than in Paris. I would not bow myself to overcome this difficulty in Paris, for I would never humble myself where I should receive no advantage. But in London it was not nec-

essary, and I yielded myself up for several months to the vortex of the great world.

I felt again the *mania for going,* and with great impatience I deferred my departure for Holland till the fore part of June. At Harwich I embarked for *Helvoetsluys,* which we reached with a fine wind in twelve hours. Holland, in the summer, is a cheerful and smiling country, but I should have liked it even better had I visited it before England; since its population, wealth, neatness, wise laws, industry, and ceaseless activity, are all on a smaller scale than in England; in fact, after much traveling and observation, the only two European countries I have left with a desire to see again are England and Italy. In the former, art has conquered and transformed nature; in the latter nature has always robustly struggled in a thousand different ways to take vengeance on her often unhappy, and always inoperative governments.

I stayed at the Hague much longer than I intended, and at last fell into the snares of love I had hitherto always escaped. *Una gentil Signorina,* a bride of year, full of natural charms, modest, beautiful, and ingenuous, captivated my heart. The country is small, with few amusements; and at first I saw her much oftener than I wished, but at last I could not live but in her society. Unconsciously I had been captivated, and I felt that I could never leave the Hague while I lived—it seemed impossible to live without her.

But my Holland felicity did not last long. The husband of my mistress was very opulent, and his father had been governor of Batavia. He frequently changed his residence, and having recently purchased a baronial domain in Switzerland, he was going there to pass the autumn. In August he made a trip to Spa with his wife, and as he was not very jealous, I followed them. On their return we came together as far as Maestricht, where I was forced to leave her, for she was going to the villa with her mother, while her husband went on to Switzerland. I was unacquainted with her mother, and there was no plausible pretext for introducing me into their house. This separation cut me to the heart, but I had some hope we should meet again. I returned to the Hague. A few days after her husband went to Switzerland, and she once more came to the Hague. My bliss was

supreme, but it was only a transient gleam. For ten days I was infinitely the happiest man in the world. She spoke of the absolute necessity (to avoid scandal), of delaying no longer to join her husband, for he had commanded her to do it.

I should not be believed should I recount all the frenzies of my desperate heart. I heartily desired to die, but I said not a word to any one. My grief was profound and silent; it may be I was ashamed or distrusted myself, and did not dare to show it. So I either remained silent or wept. Still most sad, I determined to return to Italy. The sight of a country and places where I had been left sighing for my loved object almost as soon as possessed, filled me with grief.

(1769.) Such was my first journey of two years. After staying six weeks in my sister's villa, I accompanied her to Turin. I had grown so rapidly I was no longer recognized by my friends, so great was the change that roving, careless life had made in my constitution.

In passing Geneva I bought a trunk full of books. Among them were the works of *Rousseau, Montesquieu, Helvetius* and similar authors. On reaching home with a heart overflowing with melancholy and love, I felt the absolute necessity of applying my mind to some study with vigor. But what should I do? A superficial education, crowned by six years of idleness and dissipation, had equally unfitted me for every kind of application. Undetermined whether I should now stay at home or continue my travels, I resolved, for that winter at least, to shut myself up in the house of my sister. I read all day, walked out very little, and literally saw no one. My readings were always confined to French Books. But the book of books, the one which made me pass away the hours of that winter with ravish delight, was Plutarch! His lives of those truly great men; as Timoleon, Cæsar, Brutus, Pelopidas, Cato, I read over four or five times with such transport of excitement, tears and enthusiasm, that a person in an adjoining room would have supposed I was mad. When the great deeds of those wonderful men flashed on my mind, I jumped upon my feet, carried away with excitement, and tears of grief and anger rose to my eyes, to find myself, born in Piedmont, and in times, and under govern-

ments, where nothing noble could be said or done, nay scarcely conceived or felt with impunity.

The age of twenty-one left me time to think. I had adjusted my affairs with my curator, whose power had terminated. Examining my affairs I found my income much greater than my curator had pretended; and in this he rendered me a signal service, by teaching me lessons of economy, which I seldom disregarded in my future life. Finding myself with an effective spendible income of about 2500 sequins, besides a large sum saved during my minority, I esteemed myself rich enough for a single man in our country; and abandoning all idea of accumulating, I arranged everything for my second journey, which I determined to make more dashingly.

After obtaining the indispensable and hard permission of the king, I set out in May, 1769, for Vienna. In this journey I abandoned to my faithful Elia all money troubles, and began to reflect seriously upon life. That fastidious and indolent melancholy, that mere impatience of place which had once tormented me, were now succeeded by a kind of pleasing sadness, which loved reflection. This was the combined effect of my disappointment in love, and a close application for six months to study. The sublime Essays of *Montaigne* were of great value to me, and perhaps I owe the little I have ever *thought* to him. His ten small volumes occupied exclusively the pockets of my carriage, and were my constant and faithful companions. They delighted and instructed me, and they flattered my ignorance and pride, for I used to open them at random and read a page or two and throw them down to abandon myself to my own reflections. But I was mortified to meet on almost every page Latin passages I could not understand, and I used to hunt in the notes for the interpretation of the most trivial quotations, even in prose, to say nothing of the sublime poets. I will say more even—his frequent quotations from our early Italian poets I leaped over, for they would have cost me some little effort. Such was my early ignorance and subsequent disuse of this divine tongue, which I was every day forgetting more and more.

My route lay through Milan and Venice, cities I wished to revisit—Trent, Inspruck, Augsburgh and Munich, I passed them all rapidly. Vienna participates too much in the little-

ness of Turin, without its local beauty; but I stayed there all summer and my time was lost. I made a trip in July to Buda, to see a part of Hungary. At last I was forced by ennui into society, but I was well shielded against the insidious arts of love, by practicing the remedy recommended by Cato.

In September I went on to Prague and Dresden, where I stayed a month; afterwards to Berlin, for a sojourn of the same period. On entering the States of Frederick the Great, which seemed the continuation of a single Body-Guard, I felt my horror doubled and trebled, for that *military trade,* which is the most infamous, and, in fact, the only basis of arbitrary power, the necessary fruit of such myriads of satellite soldiers. I was presented to the king; I felt not emotion of wonder or respect but of indignation and even of rage; feelings whose power and intensity were every day inflamed by the sight of all those objects which have usurped the face and fame of Truth. *Count di Finch,* minister of the king, presented me; he asked why, being in the service of my king, I had not that day appeared in uniform. I replied; There seems to be no lack of uniforms here! The king addressed to me the four words, customary on such occasions. I eyed him profoundly and most respectfully—square in the face, and thanked heaven I had not been born his slave. I departed from that universal Prussian barrack, about the middle of November, abhorring it as much as was necessary.

I set out on my route to Hamburg, and after staying there three days, went on to Denmark, and reached Copenhagen the first of December. This country pleased me, from its resemblance to Holland, and a certain activity, industry and commerce we are not accustomed to see in petty monarchical governments; and in fact all those things which produce a kind of general prosperity, that strikes one at first sight, and bespeaks a silent eulogium upon the Ruler. Not one of these things can be found in Prussia, although the Great Frederick may *command* Letters, Arts and general prosperity, to flourish under his *grasp.* I liked Copenhagen then, because it was neither Berlin nor Prussia, a country which left on my mind a more painful and disagreeable impression than any other, although there is in Berlin particularly so much that is grand and

beautiful in architecture. But I cannot, even to this day, think of those everlasting files of soldiers, without feeling the same indignation that stirred my soul when I saw them the first time.

Landing at last at Abo, the capital of Swedish Finland, I prosecuted my journey over fine roads, with fleet horses, to St. Petersburg. I arrived there the last of May, and I cannot say if it was day or night when I reached that city; for at this season in those polar climates night is almost annihilated. Worn out by the fatigue of having for many nights slept only in my carriage, my head was so confused, and I was so tired of that perpetual gloom, I could no longer tell the day of the week, nor the hour of the day. I hardly knew in what part of the world I was, for the customs, the dress, and the beards of the Muscovites seemed more like those of Tartars than Europeans. I had read Voltaire's history of Peter the Great. I had associated in the academy at Turin with Muscovites, and heard much said about that rising nation, and my fancy, which was continually seizing upon new delusions, had exaggerated it all. But, alas! I had scarcely set my foot in that Asiatic encampment of lined tents, reminding me of Rome, Genoa, Venice, and Florence, than I was inclined to laugh outright. And all I afterwards saw in that country only confirmed my first impression, and I have brought away the precious notice that it is not worth seeing.

Cursing the Russians and Prussians, and all others under the lying face of man who tyrannize over the human race, worse than brutes; and industriously spreading my name, age, rank, character, and intentions (since all these things are demanded by every sentinel, on entering, passing through, staying, or leaving every little village), I at last stood for the second time in Berlin, after a month's journey as disagreeable as a descent to Pluto, which could not be more dark, gloomy, and inhospitable. At Zorendorff I visited the battle-field where so many thousands of the Russian and Prussian host were freed from their yoke and left their bones. Their vast sepulchral mounds were clearly indicated by the green luxuriant grain which rose over them in the midst of the barren, sickly field. Here the sad but true reflection was forced on me, that slaves were born to enrich the soil. But all this only

the more inflamed my desire, and prepared me to see merry England.

(1771.) During my first visit to London, I had been captivated with a beautiful lady of high rank; and unconsciously to myself her image had wrought itself into my heart; which contributed to render that country so delightful, and inflamed my desire to return. But although she had not frowned on my addresses, yet my restive and wild disposition had preserved me from her snares. On my return I was somewhat more of a gentleman—had reached an age more susceptible of love, and forgetting my first attack of that unlucky contagion which resulted so unsatisfactorily at the Hague, I now fell so desperately under its sway, the recollection of it still makes me shudder, while I sit here writing in the first frost of my old age. I often met with my *bella Inglese* at Prince Maserano's, with whose lady I had taken a box at the Italian Opera. I never saw her in her own house, for at that time English women were not acustomed to receive *visits* particularly from foreigners. Besides her husband was as jealous of her, as an Englishman knows how to be. These obstacles only inflamed my passion—I met her every morning at Hyde Park, or on some other promenade; every evening I saw her in some crowded assembly, or at the theater, and the matter became every day more and more serious. At last I was happy in the thought that my passion was returned, yet I found bitterness in the reflection, that all this could not continue with security, for any great length of time.

The days passed—they flew; spring was already advanced, and by the end of June, at the farthest, she was going into the country for seven or eights months, where it would be absolutely impossible to see her at all. In the meantime I waited for June to come, as the day of my death, for the physical possibility of surviving such a separation never entered my mind. This passion surpassed my first in intensity and duration. Absorbed in the fatal thought, of being forced to die, when we separated, I acted the part of a man who has nothing to lose. The character too of my mistress only made me madder still, for she seemed neither to understand, nor to relish anything by halves.

At last our imprudences aroused her husband, and on sev-

eral occasions he showed some signs of resentment—nothing pleased me better, and I only waited for an outbreak, that would bring matters to a crisis—salvation or death. In this horrible state I lived five months, when the bomb burst in the following manner.

I had been frequently to the house, at an imminent risk—but hitherto we had escaped detection. The London houses are small, the doors are always kept shut, the servants are generally in the basement, so that a person within may easily introduce a stranger into some room near by, on the same floor. Consequently all my contraband introductions had succeeded admirably well, for I took care to be on the spot at those hours the husband was gone, and the servants were at their meals. Success encouraged us to greater risks. In May her husband took her out to a villa, sixteen miles from London, to pass eight or ten days, and we immediately fixed the day and hour of meeting. Her husband was an officer in the Guards, and we chose a day when he would be obliged to attend a review and sleep in London. That same evening I set out on horseback unattended; she had given me the exact topography of the place, and I knew what I was about. I left my horse at an inn a mile distant and prosecuted my journey on foot, through the dark, to the gate of the park, where the lady herself awaited me; and we entered the villa unseen, as we supposed. But these visits had been brimstone on the fire, and nothing would have satisfied us but to know they would last forever. We now took certain measures for repeating them as often as possible, while this short *villeggiatura* lasted; well knowing a long and dreadful separation was just at hand.

The next morning I returned to London, raving to think two days must pass before we could meet again. I counted the hours and the minutes of the separation. I lived in a constant delirium, indescribable, incredible to those who have not passed the same ordeal, and certainly few have one so dreadful. I found no peace, except in riding and dashing about like a madman—I knew not where—a moment of quiet or repose, to eat or sleep, and I bounded again to my feet with horrible groans and screams, and, like a raving lunatic, vented my fury in rushing around the room. I still kept one beautiful horse I purchased at Spa, and when I was on his back I played off the

maddest pranks, frightening even the horsemen of England, scaling the highest and widest hedges heels over head, and wide ditches, as though they had been level ground. One of those mornings, which intervened my visits to that blessed villa, while riding out with the Marquis Caraccioli, I thought I would show him a fine feat with my noble horse; I reined him up before the highest fence I could find between the road and the meadow. But half mad myself, I neglected to give in time the necessary help to the horse, and as he leaped, he struck one foot against the fence, and we both rolled in the meadow together. He leaped first upon his feet—I was not conscious of having hurt me in the least; besides my mad passion had quadrupled my courage, and it seemed that I was looking for the first chance of breaking my neck. The Marquis now cried out from the other side of the scaled hedge, and begged me not to make another trial, but I caught my horse, and unconscious what I had done, sprang to his back and spurred him up to the same fence. He now amply restored my honor and his own, for he scaled the fence in an instant. But my triumph was short; I had rode on only a few steps when I began to feel a burning pain in my left shoulder, which was in fact dislocated, and the collar-bone broken. The pain increased, and the few miles we had to go seemed interminable. The surgeon came, and after bantering with me a long time, said he had replaced everything and ordered me to stay in bed.

Let him who knows what love is fancy to himself my fury and madness on finding myself thus nailed to the bed in this style on the eve of the happy day fixed for my second visit to the villa! This happened Saturday morning; I endured it through the day, and Sunday about six in the evening, after a little repose, determined at all hazards to get up, and without any regard to Elia's entreaties, I entered a carriage and set off for the villa. A ride on horseback was now impossible—I was bandaged up, and tortured with pain. I dared not ride as far as the villa, and I left the carriage two miles behind, making the remaining distance on foot, with one hand in a sling and a drawn sword in the other, alone in the night, to the house of another man, not as a friend.

In the meantime the jolting of the carriage had so disar-

ranged the bandages, and increased the pain, that my shoulder was again dislocated. But I was the happiest man in the world as I drew nearer to my mistress. At last, not a little exhausted, for as I had no confidants I could have no help, I reached the park. I was obliged to scale the fence, for the gate through which I had passed before was now locked. The husband was called to the review of the following day (Monday), and had gone that evening to sleep in London.

I reached the house and found her waiting for me. Neither of us thought much of the incident of finding the gate locked, which she had opened herself several hours before—I remained till daybreak, and went out the same way I had entered, firmly convinced I had been seen by no living soul. I made my way back to my carriage, and reached London about seven in the morning, half mad with the anguish of the separation, and the torture of a dislocated and terribly inflamed shoulder. But I was so wild with frenzies I borrowed no trouble about consequences, although I foresaw everything. The surgeon adjusted the bandages again, but I would not suffer him to replace the shoulder. Tuesday evening I was somewhat better, and went to the Italian theater. I found Prince di Maserano and his lady in their box, and they were not a little astonished to see me, for they supposed I was maimed and in bed.

In the meantime I maintained a calm aspect listening to the music, which stirred up a thousand stormy feelings in my heart: although my face, as usual, was like marble. All at once I heard my name called out by some one in the lobby. By a kind of mechanical impulse I sprang to the door, opened it, passed out and closed it behind me in an instant, and there before my eyes stood the husband of my mistress demanding admittance from one of the guards. I had long expected this encounter, and although I could not honorably provoke it, I desired it above anything else in the world. These brief words now passed between us:—"Here I am," I exclaimed, "who seeks for me?" "I," he replied, "I seek you, for I have something to say to you." "Let us go," I answered, "I am ready to hear you," and we both left the theater without another word. It was about half-past seven, for in the long May days the London theaters open at six. From the Haymarket we

went to St. James's Park, where through a post paling we entered Green Park. Here in a secluded corner we drew our swords without saying a word. I was prepared for the meeting—for gentlemen carried swords at the time, and he had run to a swordseller to provide himself with a good one the moment he returned from the villa. In passing through Pallmall he had two or three times reproached me with having clandestinely entered his house, and he demanded my reason. I was wild with frenzy; in my inmost soul I felt how just and sacred was the wrath of my adversary, but I only replied, "It is not true, sir—but since you believe it I am here to give you a good account of the matter." He repeated his accusation, and gave a minute account of my last visit to the villa, with every particular. I still declared, "It is false." Finally he ended the matter by saying, "Why do you wish to deny it when my wife herself has confessed it all?" I was absolutely confounded, and replied (although I did wrong and repented of it afterwards), "What she has confessed I will never deny." But I felt repugnance while standing before the face of an injured man, in denying what was so clear; but I forced myself up to it to save the woman if possible. This was said before we arrived on the ground. In the act of drawing my sword he observed my arm in a sling, and he had the magnanimity to ask if that would offer any impediment to fighting. I replied I hoped not, and thanking him for his courtesy began the attack. I was always a bad swordsman, and I now fought reckless of all the rules of the art, like a madman as I was, bent on death. What I did I can hardly say. I only know I attacked him with fury. The sun which was just setting, was streaming so full in my eyes I could hardly see. But six or eight minutes of desperate fighting changed our position and brought the sun directly behind me. We battled away a long time, I dealing out blows in all directions, and he parrying them, and I concluded he did not kill me because he didn't wish to; and I didn't kill him because I didn't know how. At last he made a pass and hit me on the right arm, between the hilt and the elbow. In a moment he saw I was wounded. I did not feel it, it was so slight. Lowering the point of his sword he told me he was satisfied, and asked if I was, also. I replied that I was not

the offended party and the matter rested with him. He sheathed his sword, and I did the same. He immediately took himself off, and I remained a little while to see what damage I had sustained. My coat was cut, but feeling little pain, and seeing little blood, I judged the wound was only a scratch. Unable to use my left arm I could not take off my coat, and I contented myself with tying a handkerchief around the wound as well as I could with my teeth, to diminish the loss of blood. Leaving the park I returned to the theater, through Pallmall, where I arrived just three quarters of an hour after I left. Perceiving by the light of the streets, that neither my coat nor hands were stained with blood, I applied my teeth once more to remove the handkerchief. Feeling a mad and boyish desire of showing myself again at the theater, I went to the same box where the affair had begun. The Prince immediately asked me why I had left the box so hastily and where I had been. Perceiving they had overheard no part of the conversation outside the box, I replied I had forgotten an engagement with a person, and therefore I had gone out. I said nothing more.

I made a desperate struggle to control myself, but I was deeply agitated about the result of such an affair, with the dreadful consequences to my beloved mistress. A quarter of an hour after I left, without knowing what to do with myself. But as the wound did not prevent me from walking, I thought I would go to the residence of a sister-in-law of my mistress, who had favored our intercourse, and in whose house we had sometimes met.

This was a lucky idea, for the first object that met my eyes after entering the house was my mistress herself. At a sight so unexpected, with such a tumult of strange feelings, I nearly fainted away. She gave me a full account of the affair as it *ought* to have been, but not as it really was, for the truth reached me through another channel. She told me her husband was informed of my first visit to the villa, although he could not identify my person. He had ascertained that a horse had been left at an inn, and taken away in the morning by a person who paid generously without saying a word. He had set some one in his confidence to play the spy this second time, who on his return Monday morning

gave him a clear account of everything. Sunday he set out for London, while late the same day I went to his villa. The spy (one or more) saw me pass the church yard, approach the park gate, and finding it shut scale the fence. He had also seen me leave at daybreak, and start off on foot on the great road to London, but no one had shown himself to me. Having no interest of his own at stake, and seeing me going on with a desperate look and a drawn sword, he probably thought it better to let me go on. But certain it is if any attempt had been made by one, two, or three, to arrest me, the matter would have had a fatal termination for me, and in attempting flight I should have been taken for a robber, to have made an attack or defense, an assassin, and as for myself, I was fully determined not to be taken alive. I should have been driven to the sword, and in that country of wise and inflexible laws, such things infallibly meet with the severest punishment. I tremble even now writing this account, but I did not falter at the time.

It so happened that in returning to his villa on Monday, the husband had been driven by the same postilion who had waited two miles from there all night for me. He had given him an account of the matter as something uncommon, and from the picture he had drawn of my stature, form, and hair, it was evident who was the visitor. He had the account also from his own servants, and thus at last he gathered the so much desired certainty of his damages!

And here, in describing the strange effects of English jealousy, Italian jealousy is forced into a laugh, so different are the passions in different characters and climates, and especially under such widely different laws. Every Italian reader will now expect to hear of blows, poison, and stabs, or the confinement of the wife, &c. But nothing of all this happened. The English husband, although he adores his wife in his way, loses no time in invectives, in threats or quarrels. He appeals to the law, and convicts her of her crime. On Tuesday morning the husband gave her to understand he no longer considered her his wife, and that he should immediately procure a divorce. And as this would not be enough, he would make me atone dearly for the insult—that day he should set out for London, where, without doubt, he would find me. She

now dispatched a note of warning to me by one of her confidants. The messenger was well paid, and he nearly killed his horse, for he made the distance to London in less than two hours, and arrived an hour before the husband. But as luck would have it, I was not found by the messenger or the husband, and knew nothing about it. Having gone out, the husband went immediately to the theater, where he found me as I have related. Fortune in this casualty secured for me two great advantages. I had dislocated my left arm instead of my right, and I did not receive the letter till after the encounter, or I should have managed matters much worse. The wife set out by another road to London the instant her husband left, and stopped at the house of her sister-in-law near that of her husband. Here she heard that the husband, less than one hour before, had returned in a coach, from which he had dashed out and shut himself in his room without seeing or speaking to a soul. She, therefore, supposed we had met and I had fallen.

This narration I received from my mistress by piece-meal, interrupted as may easily be supposed by the dreadful agitation of those strange feelings which excited us both. But for the moment the explosion had ended in a felicity for us unforeseen, and almost incredible; for the inevitable divorce would bring me the only consummation I desired on earth—to join in myself, the conjugal tie I was now breaking. I was so intoxicated with the thought I forgot my wound for hours. I then examined my arm in the presence of my mistress. I found the skin scarified for some distance, and a good deal of blood clotted in the folds of my shirt, without any other damage. I had now the curiosity to examine my sword; it was well battered up by the strokes of my adversary—two-thirds of the distance it was hacked like a saw. I preserved it as a trophy for many years. The night was soon far advanced, and I separated from my mistress. I was determined not to go home without passing by the Marquis Caraccioli, to tell him everything. From the confused manner in which he had heard of the affair, he also firmly believed I had been left dead in the park. He greeted me as a man risen from the dead, and we passed two hours more of the night in talking together, so that I got home about daybreak. Getting to bed

after a day crowded with so many and such strange events, I never slept a sounder or a sweeter sleep.

Such is the history of the preceding day. Seeing the messenger arrive on a horse all drenched with foam, and being entreated by him to deliver the letter to me without any delay, my good Elia set out in search of me without losing a moment. He first went to the Prince Maserano's, and not finding me, he followed up his search at Caraccioli's some miles distant, thus losing several hours. In returning to my house in Suffolk street, near the Haymarket, he stepped into the Opera, although he did not believe I would go there with a dislocated shoulder and my arm in a sling. The door-keepers who knew me very well, told him I had only ten minutes before gone out with a person who had come expressly to see me. Elia knew very well (but not from me), all about my desperate passion, and as soon as he heard the name of the gentleman, and thought from whence the letter came, everything flashed clearly on him at once. Knowing how bad a swordsman I was, and that my left arm was disabled, he believed me a dead man. He ran to St. James's Park, but not going by the way of Green Park, he had missed me. Night now came on, and he was obliged with everybody else to leave the Park. Ignorant of my fate he went to the husband's house, thinking he could learn something there, and having better horses, he came up just as the husband himself arrived. He saw him dash into the house with a sword and a terribly agitated appearance. Poor Elia was now more confirmed than ever in his suspicion and he went back to Caraccioli's and gave him an account of all he knew and feared.

I rose the next morning, refreshed from the fatigues of so painful a day, by several hours of the calmest sleep; I doctored my two wounds, my shoulder being more painful than ever, although the other troubled me less, and then hurried to my mistress, with whom I passed the entire day. By means of the servants, who had their eyes on the husband's doings, I knew what was going on. I believed the approaching divorce would put an end to all our misfortunes. Her father, whom I had well known for years, had come on Monday to see his daughter and congratulate her upon uniting herself on her second marriage, with a man worthy of her (as he called me),

—but still I saw a dark cloud on the beautiful brow of my mistress, which seemed to foretell the approach of some calamity. She protested with tears and without ceasing, that she loved me above everything—that the scandal and the dishonor brought upon her name, would be amply compensated, if she could always live with me, but she was more than sure I would never marry her. This strange assertion obstinately persisted in, made me desperate. I knew she esteemed me neither false nor dishonorable, and I could not account for her distrust. This harrowing perplexity annihilated all my satisfaction in seeing her freely the whole day; to say nothing of the odium of a persecution already commenced, so trying to any person of honor and sensibility. Thus passed the three days, from Wednesday till Friday. At last I firmly insisted on her solving the horrid enigma of her words, her melancholy and distrust. At last after a long and serious effort, and a painful preface interrupted by sighs and bitter sobs, she told me "she knew but too well she was in every respect entirely unworthy of me, that I ought not, could not and would not marry her, *for already—before—loving—me—she—had—had —loved.*"—"And whom?" I exclaimed, interrupting her with the greatest agitation—"*A—a—a—Jockey* (a groom of the stable),—*who was—in my—husband's house!*"—"He lived there? And when? Oh God! I feel myself dying! But why tell me such a thing. Cruel woman!—It would have been better to stab me."—Here she interrupted me, and by degrees at length made an entire, shameful confession of her brutal passion.

Hearing these indescribably painful particulars, petrified me, till I became insensible as a stone. My very worthy forerunner rival, it then appeared, lived in the husband's house at the very time of which we speak. It was he who had first spied the movements of his lady-love; he had discovered my first visit to the villa, and the horse I left all night at the country inn; he too with others of the house, had afterwards seen and recognized me on my second visit on Sunday evening —and finally having heard of the duel between me and the husband, and his desperation in being obliged to get a divorce from a woman he seemed to adore, this Jockey Lover was induced on Thursday to present himself before his master, to

undeceive the husband, avenge himself, and punish the false woman and the new rival. He had moreover openly confessed and minutely described the whole history of his *triennial loves* with his mistress—he also concluded by earnestly intreating his master not to despair for the loss of *such* a wife, but rather congratulate himself upon his good fortune in getting rid of her. These horrid particulars I learned afterwards;—from herself I knew nothing but the fact, and that too extenuated as much as possible.

My anguish and fury, the many resolutions, all false, all fatal, and all vain, which I made and unmade that evening, blaspheming, groaning and screaming, and yet in the midst of such anger and torture still madly loving so unworthy an object, it is impossible for words to describe, and even now twenty years after, I feel my blood boil while I think of it.

I left her that same night telling her she knew me too well, when she said and repeated so often, I should never make her my wife and that if I had become acquainted with such infamy after marrying her, I should certainly have killed her with my own hand, and perhaps myself over her body, had I still loved her as well as I unfortuntely did at that moment. I added that I despised her somewhat less for having had the fidelity and courage *spontaneously* to confess such a thing, that as a friend I would never abandon her, and that I was ready to go with her to any unknown part of Europe or America and live with her, on condition she should neither be nor appear to be my wife. Thus I parted from her Friday evening, torn by a thousand furies. I rose at daybreak on Saturday morning, and casually glancing my eye over one of the London papers, the first thing that fell under them was my own name. Opening my eyes tolerably wide I read a not very short article, in which the whole affair was minutely and truthfully related, with all the fatal and laughable particulars of my groom-rival, his name, age, figure, and ample confessions to his master. It was enough to strike me dead! Recovering a little the control of my mind, it was as clear as daylight that the faithless woman had *spontaneously* confessed everything *to me after the Gazette of Friday morning had already confessed it all to all the world!* Losing now all restraint or reason, I rushed to her house and poured out

upon her the most furious, despicable and bitter invectives, mingled with love, the deadliest grief, and the most desperate resolutions. I had, however, the mean weakness to return and spend the day with her, some short hours after having sworn she should never see my face again. I went back the day after, and several more, until she determined to abandon England, where she had become a by-word, and go over to France to retire to a convent. I accompanied her through several of the provinces of England to protract the hour of our separation, cursing myself for it, but unable to tear myself from her; at last I seized a moment when shame and indignation were stronger than love, and leaving her in Rochester, where she and her sister-in-law set out by Dover for France, I returned to London.

On my arrival I learned that the husband had prosecuted the suit for a divorce in my name—thus according me a preference over our third triumvir, his own groom, who by the bye he still retained in his service! So truly generous and evangelical is the jealousy of an Englishman. But I have not a little praise to bestow upon this injured husband. He would not kill me when he had me in his power, nor impose any fine upon me, as the laws of that country (where every affront has its *tariff*) enabled him to do it so heavily, forcing me to handle the purse instead of the sword, and impoverishing, or at least embarrassing me exceedingly; for the indemnity awarded would be proportioned to the injury he had sustained, loving his wife as he did, and suffering the deep disgrace brought upon him by the groom, who could make no restitution. Therefore, I estimate that when converted into sequins I should not have come off clear for less than ten of twelve thousand—perhaps more. That high-born and moderate young man behaved towards me, in that humiliating affair, vastly better than I deserved. The testimony, and the confessions of divers persons, established the case beyond doubt, and even without my presence, or the least impediment to my leaving England, a complete divorce was obtained.

I have thus indiscreetly, perhaps, but with design, truly enumerated the smallest particulars of this extraordinary, and to me important affair, not only because it made a great

noise at the time, but afforded me an excellent occasion of putting myself to the test. I thought that by analyzing the affair with truth and minuteness, I should satisfactorily unfold my character to my readers.

After so dreadful a storm I found no peace, while I had day by day before my eyes those same scenes, and I allowed myself to be persuaded by the few who still felt a friendly commiseration for my state to leave England.

My horses had all been sold when I left London, except that beautiful creature left with the Marquis Caraccioli, and as without horses I am never half myself, I bought two soon after my arrival at Barcelona—an Andalusian, of the race of Xeres, a noble, golden chestnut, and a Cordovese *Hacha,* smaller, but high-spirited. I had always longed for Spanish horses, so difficult to extract, and it seemed too good to be true, to have two so beautiful, and they did far more to dispel my sadness than Montaigne. On these horses I determined to make the entire journey of Spain; for the roads throughout that completely African kingdom are so dreadful post-horses are unknown. A slight indisposition forced me to remain in Barcelona till November, and by the help of a Spanish grammar and dictionary, I began to study that beautiful language, so easy for the Italians. I read Don Quixote carefully and with great delight, but my task was much easier from having so often read it in French.

Journeying on to Saragossa and Madrid, I got used to this new mode of traveling through deserts, where they who are not well supplied with youth, health, money, and patience, cannot long hold out. I got on so well that during those fifteen days journey to Madrid I suffered less on the road than while stopping in those half-barbarous villages—for my restless disposition found its longings gratified only in the excitements of changing scenes.

I must here relate a mad brutality I practiced upon my Elia. One evening when a young artist supped with me, Elia entered at the usual hour, while we were talking, to arrange my hair for the night. In doing it up he happened to pull a single hair pretty violently. Without saying a word to him I bounded to my feet swifter than lightning, and with a candlestick I had seized, leveled such a brutal blow upon his right

temple, that the blood gushed out suddenly, as from a fountain, and flew in the face, and all over the body of the young man seated in front of me, on the other side of the supper-table. The Spaniard not having observed, or even thought it possible the pulling a single hair could occasion such unexpected fury, believed me mad, and he sprang forward to seize me. But already the bold, offended, and cruelly wounded Elia, had dashed upon me, to beat me, and he did right. But I dodged his grasp, and seized my sword from a box in the room, and had just time to draw it and hold it to the breast of the infuriated Elia, as he turned on me to renew the attack. The Spaniard now tried to separate us; all the house was in an uproar, the servants rushing up stairs, and the strife finally ended half comic, half tragic, and so extremely disgraceful to me. Getting a little cool an explanation followed. I told him the pulling of my hair had put me out of my wits. He replied he was unconscious of having pulled my hair at all, and the Spaniard remarked, that although I was not insane, I might have shown more sense.

When this horrible quarrel was over, I felt the deepest regret, shame and mortification; and I told Elia, he would have done well if he had killed me on the spot; and he was the man to have done it, too, being nearly a palm higher than myself, tall as I am, and in carriage and strength, nothing inferior to his aspect. The wound on his forehead was not deep, but bled very freely, and had I given the blow a little higher, I should, have slaughtered a man whom I loved in my soul, and all for a hair more or less pulled.

I was shocked at so beastly an excess of anger. Elia was much pacified, but the offense was too fresh to admit of insensibility. I was determined to show no distrust of him. Two hours after, the wound was dressed, everything was in its place, and I went to the bed, leaving the door to Elia's room open as usual, without regard to the Spaniard, who cautioned me against thus inviting an offended man, so recently injured, to take vengeance. I even called out to Elia, that I was in bed and he could kill me that night if he wished, since I deserved it well. But he was a magnanimous hero, and no other vengeance would he ever take, except to keep the two handkerchiefs full of blood with which he had stanched the smoking

wound, and show them to me occasionally for many years. This reciprocal mixture of ferocity and generosity cannot be easily understood by those who have no experience of the customs and the blood of the Piedmontese.

Although in the eyes of the world, and even in my own, no good fruit had resulted from those five years of traveling, yet I had gained not a little expansion of ideas, and learned how to think for myself; consequently when my brother-in-law pressed me to solicit some diplomatic post, I replied, that having a little more closely inspected kings and their representatives, and having not the smallest iota of respect for any of them, I would not have represented even the Great Mogul, and I certainly would not consent to represent the pettiest of all the Kings of Europe—that the man who was born in such a country had no better lot than to live upon his own money, and busy himself in some praiseworthy occupation under the favorable auspices always of a happy independence. These replies caused this good man, who was one of the gentlemen of the King's bedchamber, to make not a few wry faces, but he never alluded to it again himself, and I remained always of the same opinion.

I was now twenty-three years old, sufficiently rich for my country, free as I possibly could be there, somewhat skilled perhaps in moral and political affairs, in having seen successively so many different countries and men; a thinker above my years, and also presuming more than I knew. With these characteristics I was necessarily to commit many other errors, till I found some praiseworthy and useful object upon which I could pour out my impetuous, intolerant, and proud spirit.

(1773.) At the close of the year of my return, I took a magnificent house in Turin, on the beautiful square of St. Carlo, and furnishing it with elegance, taste, and simplicity, I prepared to lead a gay life with my friends who flocked around me. My old companions of the academy, the friends of my first wild sports, once more became my intimates. A dozen or more of us were bound firmly together. We established a permanent society, with admission or exclusion by vote, and other buffooneries similar to the juggleries of masonry. No end proposed but our own diversion, we supped often together (but without the least scandal), and at our weekly meetings

we reasoned and talked nonsense as we liked upon everything. These august assemblies were held in my house, since it was the most beautiful and spacious of any of the company's, and living alone I was more at liberty. Among these young men (all of whom were nobly born of the first families of the city), we had a little of everything, the rich and the poor, the good, the bad, and the best, the ingenious, the stupid, and the learned. Over such a *mélange* chance had brought together, I could not, nor did I wish to shine the first, although I had seen more of the world than all of them put together. Our laws were discussed, not dictated, and were consequently impartial and just to such a degree, that a body of men like us were as capable of founding a well-balanced Republic as a well-balanced buffoonery. Fortune and circumstances decided that we should construct the last. A box was made of an enormous size, into which were thrown compositions of every sort, to be read by our president, who was the reader for the week and kept the key. Some of these effusions were often exceedingly amusing and extravagant, and as they were anonymous, we were left to divine the authors. To our common and my own particular misfortune, these compositions were all written (I will not say in the language), but in the words of the French. It fell to my lot to deposit several papers in the box which diverted the company exceedingly. They were facetious mixtures of philosophy and impertinence, written in a French, which, to say the least, could have been none of the best, but they were intelligible, and served very well for an auditory who were not more learned in the language than myself. Among others I introduced, I still preserve one which represents the scene of the Universal Judgment, in which God demands of all souls a full account of themselves, and in which divers persons portray their characters. This was well received, for it was put together with some *salt,* and much *truth,* abounding in allusions and living pictures, so true to the life of a variety of men and women in our city, that they were immediately recognized and called out by the whole company.

This little essay of my ability, to reduce my ideas, such as they were, to paper, proving a source of some pleasure to others, I began by degrees to feel the confused flame of desire

and hope, to write something that might have life; but I had no means of realizing this dream. By nature I was inclined to satire, and an appreciation of the ridiculous in persons and things. But, although I fancied I had some quickness of perception, yet I did not really, in my heart, esteem very much this fallacious kind of writing, whose transient success is founded upon the natural malice and envy of men, always more pleased in seeing their neighbors bitten than with the intrinsic merit of the biter.

In the meantime, strong and continual distraction—full liberty—female society—my twenty-four years, and my dozen horses, all these powerful obstacles to improvement, quickly extinguished any inclination I may have had to become an author. Thus I vegetated on in this disgraceful indolent life, never opening a book; and plunging once more, as would naturally be expected into another sad love affair, from which, after infinite vexation, shame and grief, I finally came forth with a true, strong and enthusiastic love of study and labor, which, from that time, never deserted me; and which, at last, banished the horrors of gloom, satiety and idleness, and I will say more—of madness, towards which I felt myself so surely verging, that had I not plunged into constant and intense application of mind, it would have left me before I was thirty years old, a fate no better than insanity or suicide.

This third intoxication of love was really an indecent affair, and lasted too long. My new flame was a woman of distinguished birth, but of none too good a name even in the gay world, and even somewhat old; that is to say, some nine or ten years older than myself. A passing friendship had already existed between us on my first going into the world, while I was yet in the academy. And now six years or more after, I found myself lodged opposite to her, and continually courted by her. I had nothing to do, and was, perhaps, one of those souls of whom Petrarch says with so much truth:

"So di che poco canape si attaccia
Un' anima gentil, quand 'ella è sola
E non è chi per lei defesa faccia."

In fine, my good Father Apollo, who, perhaps, in such a very extraordinary way, wished to woo me to himself, so ordered

matters, that although I did not love her in the beginning, nor ever esteem her afterwards; and her uncommon beauty was not much to my taste; yet, in spite of all this, I believed, like a fool, in her immense love for me, and by degrees at last began to love her, and finally, I fell in up to my eyes. There were no longer for me diversions or friends, and from that time, even my adored horses were thrown aside. I was with her from eight in the morning till midnight, eternally; discontented to be there, and yet unable to leave her; passionate and most tormenting condition in which I lived (or to speak more correctly) vegetated from the middle of the year 1773, till the end of February, 1775, without reckoning the tail of this to me fatal, and at the same time, fortunate comet.

But in spite of such follies, I began by degrees to be inflamed with a new, high, and beautiful love of glory. Finally, after some months of continual poetical consultations of worn out grammars, of wearied dictionaries, and accumulated nonsense, I hitched together five things, which I called acts, entitling it all *Cleopatra Tragedia.* When the first act was done, instead of throwing it among the waste paper, I sent it to the benignant Father Paciandi, requesting him to prune it and give me his opinion in writing. His notes were very amusing, and although they fell pretty hard, I could not restrain a hearty laugh. Among others he said of "il latrato del cor" (the barking of the heart), "this metaphor is excessively *canine,* I beg you will leave it out." His notes and his counsels determined me to rewrite it all, with severity and untiring patience. It finally turned out that the same tragedy was represented in Turin, the 16th of June, 1775. In the same way I had teased good Father Paciandi for his criticism, I teased everybody else, particularly Count Agostino Tana, who had been one of the King's pages, while I was in the academy. Our education had been similar, but after leaving the Court he had industriously cultivated Italian and French literature. His taste was formed principally in critical philosophy, and not in rhetoric. The point, the grace, and the beauty of his observations upon my unhappy Cleopatra would give the reader many a good laugh if I had the courage to record them, but they would scathe me too badly, and they would not be appreciated without reference to the piece.

I also composed a farce to follow the Cleopatra, and called it *"The Poets."* Neither the farce, however, nor the tragedy were the work of a fool, and a certain blaze of wit shone through both. In *"The Poets,"* I introduced myself under the name of Zeusippo, and I was first to deride my Cleopatra, whose shade I evoked from below to give sentence in the company of some other heroines of tragedy upon my own composition, comparing it with some other ridiculous tragedies, which had been the mature offspring of a learned incapacity, while mine was only a premature offspring of ignorant genius.

These two pieces were received with great applause for two successive evenings, and called for the third, but I had already heartily repented of so rash an exposure to the public, although I was treated with the greatest indulgence, and I prayed the actors and the manager to stop any future representation. But from that fatal evening a wild enthusiasm began to flow through every vein of my body, and I burned to bear off one day meritoriously the palm of the stage, as I had never before burned with the flames of love.

Such was my first appearance before the world. If my too numerous dramatic works did not afterwards infinitely surpass these first two compositions, this first rush upon the stage was mad and ridiculous. But if I shall ever be reckoned among the not inferior authors of tragedy and comedy, it will yet be said by him who comes after us, that my burlesque ascent to Parnassus, in pump and buskin, has resulted in a very serious affair. I will here bring the *epoch* of my Youth to a close, since my *Manhood* could not have a more auspicious beginning.

PERIOD FOURTH—MANHOOD, EMBRACING MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS OF DEVOTION TO LETTERS.

(1775.) Here I am then, scarcely twenty-seven years old, committed to the public and myself in the responsible position of a tragic author. To sustain so rash a step what was my capital?

A resolute, most obstinate, and indomitable spirit—a heart full to overflowing of passion—a whimsical mixture of love, with all its furies, and a blood-felt indignation and abhorrence of every species of tyranny—an imperfect and indistinct recol-

lection of various French tragedies I had seen performed many years before, for up to that time I had never read, much less reflected on any—a total ignorance of the rules of the drama, and a total incapacity in the divine art of writing well in my own tongue. Over all this was a hard crust of presumption, or rather insufferable petulance, and a headlong character, that made it impossible, except with difficulty, at long intervals, and with convulsive effort, to recognize, to investigate and listen to the truth. A sort of capital, as the reader clearly sees, more fit to constitute a bad and vulgar piece, than a brilliant author.

But a secret voice made itself heard in the depths of my soul, admonishing me in tones even more solemn than the counsels of my few real friends, "You must go back and become a child again, studying *ex professo* the elements of Grammar, to acquire control over the Italian tongue." I bent my ear to the admonition, and my shoulders to the work, though it was unspeakably painful and mortifying while thinking and feeling like a man, to be obliged once more to study and spell like a boy. But the flame of glory so blazingly shone before me, and the shame of these recorded follies, so strongly goaded me on to cast them from my back forever, that I girded myself up to face and to conquer these no less powerful than ridiculous obstacles.

The performance of Cleopatra had opened my eyes. I not only saw the intrinsic unfitness of the theme, so incapable of tragic effect, even in the hands of an experienced author, but I saw clearly the immense distance I must retrace my steps, before I could reach the starting point, enter upon the course, and press forward with more or less fortune towards the goal. The veil which had been thrown over me, at last fell from my eyes; I took a solemn oath, I would thenceforth spare neither pain nor fatigue to learn my own language as well as any Italian. And I took this oath because it seemed to me, if I ever learned it well, I should fail neither in fancy nor invention. I now plunged into the grammatical vortex, as Curtius into the Gulf, all armed with a steady gaze. The more clearly I saw I had thus far done everything wrong, the more firmly I believed I should in time do better; I had the proofs of this in my writing desk, my two Tragedies "Filippo," and "Poli-

nice," which three months before the rehearsal of Cleopatra, I had put into French prose, and read to some few friends, who seemed to be struck with them. Nor was I persuaded of this effect, so much from the praises they bestowed, as the unfeigned attention with which they listened to them to the end, for the silent workings of their excited countenances said more than their words. But to my great misfortune, whatever may have been the merit of these tragedies, they were conceived and brought forth in French prose, and they had a long and difficult road to travel before reaching Italian Poetry. I had sketched them, in this lean wretched language, not because I knew it, or pretended to know it, but, during five years of traveling, I had talked and heard the jargon spoken, and could wield it a little better; but such was my ignorance of every language, it turned out with me, as it did with one of the first highflyers of Italy, who being infirm, and dreaming to run with his equals, found on the trial, that to gain the victory, he lacked nothing but legs!

Such was the impossibility of translating myself even into Italian prose, that when I read an act or scene, that had before stirred my hearers, they recognized it no longer, and seriously asked me why I had made the change. Another dress and drapery made quite another figure, which could neither be recognized nor tolerated. I raged and wept, but all in vain. I was forced to pluck up patience, and remake:—to swallow down the most stupid and anti-tragical readings of the texts of our tongue, to imprint upon my mind the Tuscan usages, and (but for the awkwardness of the expression) I would say that I was obliged to *unthink* all day in order afterwards to think. But the fact of my having those two future tragedies in my desk made me listen somewhat more patiently to the pedantic counsels that now rained down on me from every quarter. Those two tragedies had also lent me the necessary fortitude for listening to the recital of Cleopatra, so unpleasant to my ears, that every verse the actor pronounced sounded like the bitterest criticism, upon a work which had already lost all its value to me—only as a spur to future exertions. The criticisms (just perhaps in part, but malignant and unlearned) made upon the tragedies of my first edition of Siena, of 1783, by no means disheartened me, neither was I inflated nor con-

vinced by the unmerited applause of the pit at Turin; excited perhaps by compassion for my juvenile confidence. The first step towards Tuscan purity was utterly to banish every kind of French reading. From that July onwards I uttered not a single word of that language, and took special pains to avoid everybody who did.

I had now been deeply absorbed for more than six months in Italian studies. In the beginning of the year 1776 I began to feel an honest and burning shame that I was so entirely ignorant of the Latin tongue. I was obliged to skip over even the briefest quotations I met with from that language. French reading I had abandoned. Shut up to Italian, I was deprived of all aid in dramatic reading. This, among other reasons, induced me to take up the Latin in earnest. I wished to be able to read the Tragedies of Seneca, some of whose sublime passages had enraptured me. I was also anxious to read the Latin translations of the Greek Tragedians, which are generally more faithful and less tedious than our Italian. .

From time to time I tried to write tragic verses, and had already versified *"Il Filippo,"* but although I had made it somewhat less feeble and contemptible than *Cleopatra,* yet the versification still seemed languid, prolix, fastidious, and trivial. And, in fact, this first Filippo, which afterwards in print was satisfied with troubling the public with only 1400 and some odd verses, in the two first attempts persisted in troubling and harassing its author with more than 2000, in which he said much less than he said afterwards in 1400.

That tediousness and feebleness of style which I attributed very much more to my ignorance than to my intellect, at last convinced me I could never speak Italian well till I had forgotten French, and I determined to go to Tuscany to accustom myself to talk, to hear, to think, to dream in Tuscan forever. I set out in April, '76, flattering myself a stay of six months would *un-Frenchify* me. But six months do not obliterate a bad habit of more than ten years' standing.

Less than a year from the performance of Cleopatra, I found myself the possessor of the little patrimony of three other tragedies. For truth's sake I will here confess from what fountains I drew them. As for "Il Filippo," born French, and child of the French, I had several years before read

something similar in the romance of Don Carlos, by the Abbé Saint Real. "Il Polinice," also Gallic, I drew from the "Rival Brothers" of Racine. "L' Antigone," unsoiled at first with exotic origin, I got by reading the 12th book of Statius, in Bentivoglio's translation. Some passages from Racine, and others from the seven Prodi of Æschylus, translated by Father *Brumoy,* had found their way into my Polinice, and I made a vow I would never read the tragedies of another man, on a subject I was writing about, before I had written my own: for I was determined not to contract the stain of plagiarism—and sink or swim for myself. He who reads much before composing steals without knowing it, and loses his originality, if he ever had any. On this account I had the year before abandoned even Shakespeare; but as I was obliged to read him in the French, it gave me less regret. I was not blind to that great author's defects —but the more he fired my blood, the more I denied myself the luxury of reading him.

Antigone was no sooner in prose, than the reading of Seneca inflamed me to idiate, at the same time, the two twin tragedies, *L'Agemennone,* and *L'Oreste.* But in spite of all this, I think I stole nothing from Seneca.

I returned to Turin in October, not because I presumed to have already thoroughly Tuscanized myself, but I had made no arrangement to stay any longer from home. But other frivolous reasons influenced me to return. I had left all my horses at Turin, and this passion, which contrasted so strangely with the Muses, was not yet rooted out. I had not yet either yielded myself up to the fascinations of study and glory, so entirely, as to forget my mania for amusement; and I could more easily indulge it at Turin, where I had a fine house, clients of every sort, horses a plenty, dissipations and friends more than enough.

But all these obstacles relaxed my study not a whit—my occupations and undertakings even increased during the winter. After completing Horace, I had read and studied inch by inch Sallust and others. The brevity and elegance of this historian so completely ravished me, that I applied myself with earnestness to translate him, and before spring my work was done. I owe much, nay, infinite obligation to that work,

which many, many times, I afterwards remade, and changed, and filed down, I know not if with any improvement to the work, but certainly with great profit to myself in understanding the Latin, and giving me power over the Italian.

In the meantime, the incomparable Abbé Tommaso di Caluso returned from Portugal, and finding me, contrary to his expectation, truly engulfed in literature, and obstinately bent upon the rugged design of becoming a tragic author, he seconded me, counseling and aiding me to all his lights with indescribable benignity and friendship. I experienced also the same attention from the learned Count S. Rafaele, whose acquaintance I formed that year, and other exquisite scholars, all my superiors in age, in learning and knowledge of my Art. They pitied and encouraged me, although the ardor of my character hardly needed a new impulse. But I feel and always shall, the deepest gratitude towards all these men, for having so generously borne my intolerable petulance; although I may safely say it was diminishing day by day, as I gained light.

I was passionately fond of the brevity of the Sallustian style, yet the sublimity of the subjects, the majesty of the orations of Livy, impressed me exceedingly. The story of Virginia, and the inflaming words of Icilius, so transported me, I idiated a Tragedy.

For the intelligence of the reader, I will here explain these words I have occasioned to use so often: *ideare* (idiate), *stendere* (extend), and *versiggiare* (versify). These three stages (or breathings, *respiri*), with which I have always given existence to my tragedies, have generally procured me the benefit of time so necessary for pondering well a composition of such importance, which, if once commenced badly, is afterwards improved only with great difficulty. To *idiate*, then, I understand to distribute the subject into acts and scenes, to establish and fix the number of persons, and in two leaves of prose draw a plan, scene by scene, of all the characters are to say and do. To *extend*, I mean, to take up again that first sheet, and following the hints laid down, fill up the scenes in prose dialogue, until the tragedy is entire, without rejecting any idea that is striking, and writing with all the power I possess, without any regard to

criticism. By *versifying* I mean not only the rendering of the prose into verse, but discerning with a mind that has reposed from the subject, the best thoughts, and rejecting the false matter of the first hurried effort. Then follows, as in every other composition, the necessary filing, pruning, and changing. But if the tragedy is not first *idiated* and *extended,* no certain progress will be made by subsequent labors. I have observed this mechanism in all my dramatic compositions, beginning with *Filippo,* and I am well persuaded it constitutes more than two thirds of the labor. In fact, after an interval has passed sufficient to have obliterated the recollection of the first distribution of scenes, if in taking up the sheet I feel rushing into my heart and fancy a tumult of thoughts and affections which compel me to write, I begin immediately to work up the materials excavated from the very heart of the subject. If this enthusiasm is not as great or greater than when I idiated, I change my plan, or give it to the flames. If the first idea is good, the sketching is rapidly done, and writing an act a day, sometimes more, rarely less, generally on the sixth day the tragedy is, I will not say done, but born. I have admitted no other judge but my own feelings. All those I have not thus idiated with enthusiasm, I have never finished, or if I extended them I never put them in verse. This was the case with *Carlo Primo,* which I began, after *Filippo,* to extend in French. The third act was not more than half sketched before I became so chilled in heart and hand, I could not bring my pen to finish it. So it was, too, with Romeo and Juliette, which I extended entirely but with great effort, and at intervals. Taking up the unhappy thing some months after, I felt such a terrible revulsion as I read it over, and was inflamed with such rage I threw it into the fire.

This method I have here described in so prolix a manner, produced the following results. My Tragedies, taken as a whole, with all their defects, have the merit of being or of appearing to most readers, of having been made at once—to have been combined together at a single blow, and every word, thought and action of the five acts, is interwoven closely with every thought, word and disposition of the preceding. This begets attention in the hearer, and heat in the action.

When a tragedy is thus extended, nothing remains for the author, but quietly to go on with the versification, separating the gold from the ore; and the solicitude which the labor of versification and the unsatisfied passion of elegance usually give to the author's mind, in no degree lessen the transport and fervor he must so implicitly yield himself to, in idiating and creating touching and terrible things. If those who come after me judge I have more effectually than others attained my object, the present digression may aid some one who professes this art. Where I have been mistaken, it will serve others in the invention of better methods.

During the previous summer, which I passed at Florence, I had frequently met a most accomplished and beautiful lady,[1] who, being a distinguished foreigner, could not pass unobserved, and being seen she could not but captivate. The nobility of Florence, and all foreigners of birth, were in rivalship for her. I was buried in my studies, and melancholy, and solitary by nature, careful always to shun the most captivating and beautiful; I had therefore taken no measures to be introduced at her house, but at the theaters and on the public walks I saw her frequently. The first impression I received of her had been pleasing, and I had not forgotten her. Sweet, flashing, dark eyes, united (which is rarely seen) with the purest complexion, and fair hair, gave to her beauty a brilliancy difficult to withstand. Twenty-five years of age, with a taste for the beautiful arts and letters, a golden character, and despite painful domestic trials to which fortune had abandoned her, still amiable and cheerful—such charms were too powerful to resist. During the autumn, one of my acquaintances often proposed to introduce me. I thought myself sufficiently secure, and I risked an interview. I had ample warning, but I was captivated. But vacillating still between the yes and the no of this new passion, I posted to Rome on horseback in December. It was a mad journey; its only fruit was my Sonnet on Rome, which I wrote one night in a low tavern of Baccano, where I could not close my eyes. It consumed about

[1] Alfieri here introduces Louisa de Stolberg, Countess of Albany, who was wife of the last of the Stuarts, who made pretensions to the throne of England.

twelve days. I passed Siena twice, and I saw my friend Gori again, who did not discourage me from yielding to those new chains in which I was already more than half bound. My return to Florence riveted them forever. This fourth and last passion, fortunately for me, showed itself by symptoms entirely different from the three first. In the former my intellect had felt little of the fires of passion, but now my heart and my genius were both equally kindled, and if my passion was less impetuous, it became more profound and lasting. Such was the flame which by degrees absorbed every affection and thought of my being, and it will never fade away except with my life. Two months satisfied me I had now found the *true woman,* for instead of encountering in her, as in all common women, an obstacle to literary glory, a hindrance to useful occupations, and a damper to thought, she proved a high stimulus, a pure solace and an alluring example to every beautiful work. Prizing a treasure so rare, I gave myself away to her irrevocably. And I certainly erred not. More than twelve years have passed, and while I am writing this chit-chat, having reached that calm season when passion loses its blandishments, I cherish her dearer than ever, and I love her just in proportion as flow by her in the lapse of time those little esteemed toll-gatherers of departing beauty. In her my soul is exalted, softened, and made better day by day, and I will dare to say and believe she has found in me support and consolation.

I now began to work cheerfully, with a mind calm and secure, like one who has at last found scope for action, and support for the feelings. I was already firmly resolved never to leave Florence while the object of my affections remained there. This gave me an opportunity of executing a design I had for a long time cherished, and which had now become necessary to my existence.

(1778.) The chains of the servitude in which I was born had always been intolerable. With no enviable peculiarity, our hereditary nobles exclusively are compelled to obtain the King's permission to leave his states, even for the shortest period. This permission, which is often obtained with difficulty or impertinence, is always limited. Four or five times I had been obliged to sue for it, and although I had never

been denied, I considered it unjust, for neither cadets nor citizens of any class are subjected to such restraint, unless they are in the King's service. I had always submitted to it with increasing reluctance, but I could bear it no longer. The last time, as I have before hinted, it had been granted with an irritating word I found it hard to swallow. Besides, my writings were now increasing. Virginia I had extended with all the freedom the subject demands. I had written my Tyranny as though I had been born and was living in a country of just and rational liberty. I had read, and relished, and felt vividly Tacitus and Machiavelli, and other sublime authors like them. I had reflected and understood perfectly my position, and the impossibility of remaining in Turin while I was publishing my writings, or of printing while I lived there. I was fully conscious how many misfortunes and dangers I should be exposed to printing abroad, while I remained subject to a law I will cite below. I will add to all these cogent reasons the new passion, that so fortunately for me had inflamed my heart. In view of all this I did not hesitate an instant in my firm purpose to UNPIEDMONTESE myself as much as possible, and at all hazards abandon the nest, from which I had unfortunately sprung.

More than one way of accomplishing this occurred to me. I could still go on year after year begging for an extension of my license, and it would have been, perhaps, the most discreet measure—but even this was uncertain, and I could never entirely trust myself there while I depended on the will of others. I might resort to deceptions, subterfuges, and evasion, dissembling of debts, clandestine sales, and other expedients of escaping from my noble prison. But these means were all base and uncertain, and they were too harassing to suit my disposition. But I always liked to make an issue at once, and I firmly resolved to take the affair into my own hands and decide it for myself, rather than meet it some future day—to renounce all for art and glory, and the life of a true and independent author. It would be enough if I could save a portion of my property to live and print out of the country—all else I would give up. I was young and often rash, but I conducted matters with discretion. If I had delayed the crisis, and begun to print even the most

harmless writings out of the country, the whole matter would have become very problematical, and my subsistence, my glory, my liberty, have remained entirely at the arbitration of an absolute despot, who, enraged with my thinking, writing and working generous and free, would certainly never have allowed me to break away from his control.

A law existed at that time in Piedmont, which declared, "It is moreover prohibited to every one to cause to be printed books, or other writings, out of Our States, without the license of the Censors, under the penalty of 300 francs, or more, and corporal punishments, if circumstances exist to demand that a public example be made!" To this law was joined another: "The Vassals inhabiting Our States cannot absent themselves from the same without Our permission in writing."

Between these two fetters, it will be easily perceived I could not be at the same time Vassal and Author. I chose the latter, and hating every subterfuge and delay, I took the shortest way of bursting my chains, by making an entire donation of all my real estate, enfeofed and free, to my sister Julia, married to the Count di Cumiana. I performed this act in the most solemn and irrevocable manner, reserving to myself an annuity of fourteen thousand francs, which amounted to a little more than half my income. I was more than willing to lose the other half, and to buy independence of opinion—the choice of my home, and the freedom of my pen. But it caused me infinite annoyance and delay to bring the affair to a final conclusion; forms of law—the transaction of the business by letters consumed a great deal of time. It was, moreover, necessary to obtain the permission of the king: for in the most private affair in that blessed country the king is eternally meddling. My brother-in-law was obliged to transact the business for me and for himself, obtaining from the king license to accept my donation, and become authorized to accord to me the annuity wherever I should please to dwell. It was as plain as daylight to everybody, that the reason of this step was my determination to expatriate myself. It was, therefore, absolutely necessary the government should consent: for the king could at any time have interposed his despotism and cut off my bread.

But to my great joy the king, who most certainly knew what I was about, was a good deal more anxious to get rid of me than to keep me, and he gave his consent to my self-spoliation, and we both were supremely satisfied: he to lose me, and I to find myself once more.

I will here add a strange circumstance, both to console my enemies and excite a smile at my own expense, on the face of every man who after self-examination shall discover he is less of a baby than myself. It will serve to show the careful observer, that sometimes the feebleness of the dwarf is united with the strength of the giant. It so happened that at the very time I was writing *"Virginia"* and the *"Tyranny,"* while I was so robustly shaking off my chains, I continued still to wear the uniform of the King of Sardinia out of the country, and four years after I had left his service. And what will the *Savans* say when I confess the reason? I was persuaded my person appeared to better advantage in that dress! Laugh! O reader, and you have good reason for it, and add to your laugh too, that like a child I cared more about appearing well in the eyes of others than estimable to myself.

This affair dragged itself along from January to November (1778); for I afterwards completed another arrangement, by which I gave up all annuities, and received at once one hundred thousand francs. This was attended with even more difficulty than the first. But at last the king consented I should receive that sum sent to me, and I placed it in one of the life insurances of France. Not that I confided much more in that *most Christian,* than in the *Sardinian* king: but I thought by dividing my property I should be more sure of a subsistence. This donation was a decisive and important epoch for me. I have always blessed the thought and the result. I made no communication of it to my lady until the act was done. I would not expose her delicate mind to the test of finding fault with the measure, as opposed to my interests, or to approve it as desirable in securing durability to our love, by rendering a separation unnecessary. When she knew it she chided me with that ingenuous candor all her own. But it was too late to impede it, and she acquiesced with me, pardoning me for having kept silent,

and perhaps loved me the more, and did not esteem me the less.

I was now busied in writing and re-writing letters to Turin, to conclude these vexations, royal, legal and parental delays. Resolute at all hazards not to retreat, I wrote to Elia, whom I left in Turin to dispose of all my furniture and plate. In two months, by indefatigable working, he got together over six thousand sequins, which I ordered him to transfer to me immediately in a bill of exchange on Florence. In consequence of some accident, more than three weeks passed after this, before I received an answer from him, or any notice from the banker. I am not naturally suspicious, but I could not suppress some misgiving in these trying circumstances, or account of so strange a delay on the part of so careful and exact a man as Elia. My fancy always on fire, converted this loss from a possibility into a reality. For more than fifteen days, I firmly believed my six thousand sequins had vanished into air, with my good opinion of my Elia. The affair with my sister was not yet concluded; every day I received new cavils from my brother-in-law, all in the name of the king. I finally answered him with anger and contempt, that if he did not wish my estate as a gift, he might take in his own way, for I never would return; and I held him and his money, and his king, in contempt; and, if they kept all, it would end the business. I was determined to expatriate myself forever, even at the risk of begging. Secure of nothing now, squalid poverty stared me in the face. At last Elia's bills of exchange arrived. In those deliriums of fancy, the art I had fixed on to keep myself alive, was *training horses,* in which I esteem myself master. It is certainly one of the least servile; and it even seemed to me more *practicable* than that of poet, it being decidedly more easy to write tragedies in a stable, than in a court.

Before I was reduced to these straits, more imaginary than real, I had dismissed all my servants except one, and a cook, and these I dispensed with soon after. I had always been rather abstemious in my diet; but now I practiced a salutary and uncommon system of sobriety. I abandoned wine, coffee, &c., restricting myself to rice, and a boiled or roasted dish,

without varying it for years. Four of my horses I sent back to Turin, to be sold with the rest. Four others I gave away to Florentine gentlemen, who, although simply acquaintances, accepted them. My wardrobe, with my uniform, I gave to my servant. I now adopted a black dress for the evening, and a blue for the morning, colors I have never left off, and shall wear as long as I live. I gradually restricted myself down to bare necessities of life, and became at the same time both a miser and a giver of everything. I thus prepared myself for the worst. Regarding my six thousand sequins as my entire estate, I invested them in the French funds. Always inclined to excesses, my economy and independence proceeded by degrees to such extremities, that every day I invented some new privation, till I became almost sordid—I say *nearly*, since I still changed my linen every day, and did not neglect my person—but if I were writing of my stomach, every saving clause would be removed; for, in this respect, I had reached perfection. This was the second fit I ever had of a disease so base and degrading to the soul, and I think it will be the last.

But extreme as my avarice had become in all other respects, I was still spending a large sum for books. I collected nearly all the valuable works of our language, and the choicest editions of the Latin classics. I read them all one after the other, repeatedly, but too fast, and with too much avidity to reap their full fruit. But from my boyhood, I hated commentaries, and had rather guess out a difficulty than hunt for its solution in a note, or clear it up by reflection.

In the meantime, my compositions, during the year 1778, were seriously interrupted by the disturbances into which I was thrown, and a new obstacle had arisen to my advancement in the Tuscan tongue. My lady knew little of Italian, and I was obliged to converse with her in French, and hear it spoken in her house. But I sought an antidote to my Gallicisms in our excellent but tedious prose-writers of the 13th Century. By degrees, however, my lady learned Italian, till she spoke it more perfectly than I ever heard it spoken by a foreigner, and with a better pronunciation than the women of Italy out of Tuscany; for they pain the ear of any one

accustomed to the delicious elastic Tuscan accent. But her house was always crowded with foreigners from beyond the Alps, and my poor Tuscan went through a continual martyrdom, for three years, in Florence. Nearly all my life, it has been my lot to be followed by this Gallic barbarism, and if I am ever able to write with purity and Tuscan flavor, I shall merit double praises for the obstacles I have encountered; and, if I fail, they will plead my extenuation.

(1779.) My days now passed away in an almost perfect calm, which would have been unbroken, but for the distresses brought upon the Countess by her cruel and eternally drunken, dotard husband. Her sorrows were mine, and in them I felt the pains of death. I could only see her in the evening, and occasionally at dinner, but the husband was always present or in the adjoining room. He was no more jealous of me than others who frequented his house, but such was his system, and for more than nine years he *never, never,* went out of the house without her, nor she without him—a life of monotony that would have at last become irksome between congenial lovers. So I stayed at home all day with my books after a ride of two hours in the morning for my health. I found refuge in her presence for the evening, but my life was embittered by her afflictions. Had I not been intensely occupied with study, I never could have endured to see her so little and in the manner I did. But even this sole solace formed an antidote to the bitterness of my solitude, or I could never have endured such mad application to study.

During 1779, I versified "La Conguira de' Pazzi;" idiated "La Rosmunda," "La Ottavia," and "Il Timoleone;" extended "La Rosmunda" and "Maria Stuarda;" versified "Il Don Garzia;" finished the first Canto of the poem, and began the second.

I was solaced in these earnest labors by having the Countess near me, and in pouring out my soul to two absent friends in my letters, Gori of Siena, who had two or three times been to Florence to see me, and the excellent Abbé di Caluso, who had come to Florence in '79, partly to enjoy for a year the blessed Tuscan tongue, and partly to be with one who longed for his presence. He wished also to devote himself to his studies more quietly and liberally than he could in Turin where broth-

ers, nephews, cousins, and thoughtless persons of every sort enslaved his benignant and condescending spirit. He remained nearly a year in Florence. We saw each other every day, and passed several hours after dinner together. From his charming and enlightened conversation I learned imperceptibly far more than I should have done sweating over many books for many years.

The woman I loved led a life of trouble. These domestic trials and the barbarities of her husband at last reached such a point, in the midst of a Bacchanalian scene, on St. Andrew's night, that she was constrained to find some way of escape from his tyranny, or die. I was now obliged once more to court the favor of men in power to obtain the emancipation of an innocent victim from so humiliating a yoke—that in such an affair I knew I could manage the interests of another better than my own. I had never given her extreme counsel but when her misfortunes themselves became extreme, as in this present instance, which admitted of no other issue. I did not then, nor will I ever, descend to a refutation of the stupid and malignant imputations cast on me in this affair. It is enough for me to say I saved the countess from the tyranny of a brutal and drunken master, without sullying her honor. And those who were familiar with her situation, dying as she was, inch by inch, will readily concede that, to extricate her from such a plot, was no easy task. At first she entered a convent at Florence. She was attended by the husband, under the aspect of an ordinary visit, but he was obliged, to his infinite surprise, to leave her there, by order of the government. Shortly after, she went to Rome, at the invitation of her brother-in-law, and retired to another convent. The reasons for this rupture with her husband were perfectly understood; the separation was universally approved.

Success at last crowned my efforts; I was at liberty to visit the Countess every evening, and I once more plunged into my studies. I finished the versification of Polinice, and without taking breath, went over Antigone, Virginia, Agamemnon, Orestes, the Pazzi, Garzia and Timoleon (till then, never versified); and finally for the fourth time, I took up the obstinate Filippo. I sought occasional relaxation from excessive application to blank verse, in writing the third canto of my Poem.

In December, I composed at one stroke, the four first odes on the Independence of America. I was inspired to write these odes, by reading the noble Odes of Filicaya, which encouraged me to undertake this inspiring subject. I extended the four in six days—the third in only one—and with some slight alterations they remained as they were originally written. Such is the difference at least with my pen, between scrubbing lyrical rhyme, and writing blank verse in dialogue.

(1782.) My tragedies were now so far advanced, I began to hope I could finish them during the year. From the beginning I determined to write only twelve; they were now all conceived, extended and versified, and for the most part reversified. I continued the reversification and filing down of the rest, in the order they were originally conceived.

(1783.) In April the Countess' husband was taken dangerously ill, at Florence. His brother set out in haste to see him before he died; but his malady suddenly subsided, and he found him out of danger. During the fifteen days he was recovering, he kept his brother with him; and the priests who had accompanied him from Rome, and those who had attended the patient in Florence, were plotting to get the husband to persuade his brother he ought not to tolerate the conduct of his sister-in-law in his house in Rome. I certainly will not make any apology for the life usually led in Rome, and throughout Italy, by married women; but I will say that the conduct of the Countess was more guarded than custom universally tolerated in that city. I will add, too, that the ferocious and malignant character of her husband were matters universally known. But I will, however, acknowledge that the husband and the brother and the priests had every reason for not approving of my too frequent visits, *although they were strictly confined within the limits of unsullied honor!*

I now prepared myself for this most cruel parting. I took this measure, conscious of the sad and horrible life I should be compelled to abandon myself to if I remained in Rome, where I could not have continued my visits (however cleverly managed) without exposing her to infinite displeasures and mortifications; nor could I visit her in other places without useless and indecorous mystery and deception. For both of us to remain in Rome without seeing each other, would have been

a living torture; to lessen the evil, we both chose separation, waiting for better times.

(1793.) On the 4th of May, a day that always has and always will be a day of gloom in my memory, I separated from the one who was dearer to me than my own life. Of all our separations this was the most terrible, for the hope of seeing her again was too distant and uncertain to afford any consolation. For two years I was covered with a gloom, which suddenly arrested my literary course. I had in Rome led a delightful life; in my delicious retreat at the Strozzi Villa, near the baths of Dioclesian, I passed my mornings entirely in study, going out only an hour or two for a ride on horseback, through those desolate solitudes in the neighborhood of Rome, which invite to reflection, tears and poetry. My evenings I passed with the Countess, in whose sweet society I forgot the fatigues of study, and returned happy to my quiet home, always retiring before eleven o'clock. A home more joyous, free and rural, one more congenial to my tastes and pursuits, could never be found in the neighborhood of a great city, and I shall remember it and long for it, till I die.

I left Siena the middle of October, and went on through Pisa and Lerici to Genoa where my friend Gori accompanied me. Here after two or three days we separated—he returning to Tuscany, and I embarking for Antibo. We made a quick but dangerous sail of eighteen hours. It was a night of fear. The felucca was small, and my carriage destroyed its equilibrium. The wind and the sea were bold and terrible; but we landed in safety, and I went on without halting to Avignon, where with transport I visited the magical solitudes of Vaucluse; and Lorgue witnessed not a few of my tears. The day I passed in going and coming from Vaucluse, I composed four sonnets. It was one of the most beautiful, and one of the saddest days of my life. On leaving Avignon I visited the celebrated Chartreuse of Grenoble, where, in tears, I composed not a few rhymes.

This third sight of Paris left the same impression I always felt in that immense sewer—anger and pain. I stayed there three months, and they seemed an age. I carried numerous letters to the *literati* of every description, but I had arranged matters for going to England in December. The French

literati have little to do with our Italian literature—they seldom go beyond Metastasio, and I cared little about having anything to do with them—there was no point of contact between us. Bent upon affecting stupidity whenever I was obliged to hear or speak that anti-Tuscan nasal gibberish, I hastened the moment of my departure. Balloons were the rage just then. I saw the first and most successful experiments; one with rarefied air, the other with inflammable gas, each carrying two persons. (1784.) Grand, admirable spectacle! a theme more worthy of poetry than truth, a discovery which will be sublime whenever there is a probability of its being of any use!

I arrived in London, and in a week began to buy horses. First a racer, two for the saddle, then another, and afterwards six coach-horses. Several of my colts died, but every dead one I supplied with two live ones. This horse fever, which had now slept under its ashes six years, at last caught fire so wildly it made way against all obstacles. I had lost five horses in a short time, but kept on buying till I got up to fourteen, as I had in my tragedies. The tragedies emptied my head, the horses my purse. But the excitement of my cavalry invigorated my health and ardor for future compositions, so that these large sums were well spent, for they helped me recover my languishing fire; and I did well to launch out the money, for it was jingling uselessly in my pocket. After my donation I had passed three years in penury, and three more with economy, which left me a fine sum, the fruit of my French funds I had never touched. These fourteen friends consumed a great part of my savings in their purchase and sending to Italy; and their maintenance for five years disposed of the rest, for after once getting out of their Island, not one of them would die, and I loved them too well to sell them. Furnished with horses, overshadowed with the gloom of that dreadful separation, I shunned society. I was either with my horses, or writing her letters. During these four months in London I thought no more about tragedies than I should if I had never written any. Occasionally, indeed, the singular coincidence between the number of the tragedies and the beasts occurred to me, and laughingly I said to myself, "Thou art the man to gain a horse for every tragedy," being reminded by the

horses of the sound of the whip the pedagogues administered to us when we produced a stupid composition. Thus I lived on in shameful sloth for months and months, scarcely opening my companion-poets, and drying up my poetical vein, for in London I wrote but one sonnet, and two as I left the Capital. In April, with my numerous caravan I landed at *Calais,* and journeyed on to Siena, through Paris, Lyons, and Turin.

With a head crowded to overflowing with this horse expedition, and emptied of every noble thought, I reached Turin at the close of May, where I remained three weeks, after more than six years' desertion of my native country. After six or eight days of rest I sent my horses on to Tuscany, where I was to join them. The interval I wanted for a respite, after so many fatigues and fooleries which, in fact, had reflected little honor upon a tragic author, past his thirty-fifth year. But after all, the relaxation, the exercise, and the entire suspension of all study, had astonishingly invigorated my health, and I felt my strength and my youth renewed again, but to the sacrifice of my intellectual progress; for my horses had come very near turning me into the same ass I had been many years before. My mind had gathered once more so much of its original rust, the idea of ever writing again seemed an impossibility.

In Turin I had pleasures and mortifications. It is one of the sweetest things in the world to revisit the friends of our early youth, the scenes of our first recollection, where every plant and every stone, where all things recall our earliest thoughts and feelings. But then I found not a few of the companions of my childhood who, on this visit, took pains to avoid me. On meeting me unawares, they gave me a cold salute, and turned their faces another way,—persons to whom I had never shown anything but friendship and cordiality. This was a bitter reception truly, but it would have cut me worse had I not been informed by the few excellent associates I had, that some treated me in that way because I had written tragedies, others because I had traveled too much, the rest because I had appeared in the country with too many horses, and all such littlenesses, pardonable, however, most pardonable by one who has learned to understand others from an impartial study of himself; but still they are things to be

avoided by exiling oneself from his country forever, particularly where the country is small and the inhabitants indolent, and finally where things have come to such a pass, that only to attempt to excel them in anything whatever is a cause of mortal offense.

I went down to Asti, where I passed three days with my dear and venerable mother. And then we parted with many tears, thinking it more than possible we should see each other no more. I will not say that I felt for her the affection I might and ought, for after my ninth year I had never seen her except on a flying visit for the hour. But my esteem, gratitude, and veneration for her and her virtue have always been supreme, and will be till I die. Heaven grant her a long life, since she is a ministering angel to the poor and the distressed of the city. Her heart yearns for me, I well know, more than I desire and more than I can tell. Her deep grief at our parting cut me to the heart, and I remember it still.

In journeying on to Modena, letters from the Countess filled me sometimes with pain and sometimes inspired me with hope, but I was still harassed with continual uncertainty. But at Piacenza her letters announced her final liberation from Rome which transported me with rapture, for Rome was the only place where I did not wish to meet her; but on the other hand decency with its strong appeals forbade me from following her. She had, with a thousand difficulties, and no small pecuniary sacrifices to her husband, finally obtained from the brother-in-law and the Pope, permission to visit the waters of Baden, her health having become seriously affected by the scenes she had passed through. In June, 1784, she had set out from Rome by the long route of the shores of the Adriatic, through Bologna, Mantua, and Trent, and gone on towards Tyrol, while I had started from Turin through Piacenza, Modena, and Pistoja, to return to Siena. The thought of being so near her, and of afterwards being so far separated, was full of rapture and full of pain. I could easily have sent my carriage and servants directly to Tuscany, and taken the post-road on horseback, and very soon rejoined her, or at least seen her. I desired, I feared, I hoped, I resolved, I vacillated vicissitudes of feeling well known to the few who know how to love. But duty and regard for her reputation finally con-

quered, and cursing and weeping, I firmly kept on my journey. Weighed thus heavily down by this painful victory, I arrived at Siena after ten months of traveling. I found in my friend Gori, my accustomed and necessary consolation, and went on dragging out my life and tiring out hope.

My fourteen horses reached Siena a few days after the fifteenth which I had before left there in the care of my friend; it was my beautiful golden Fido, the one which had so often in Rome borne the Countess for a sweet burden, and for that sole reason had become dearer to me than all the rest. These horses distracted my attention from everything else, and this united with depression of heart to render abortive every attempt to resume my literary occupations. For a portion of June, and all through July I did not stir from Siena, and in the meantime I composed some rhymes, and the few stanzas necessary to complete the third Canto of my Poem; I also commenced the fourth and last. And although this piece was written in the midst of so many interruptions, at such long and broken intervals, and without any systematic plan, yet the subject had been deeply impressed upon my mind. I was particularly careful to guard against needless prolixity in the work, for if I had indulged in episodes and ornaments, I should have written with greater facility. But in the production of a work, original, racy, and of a terrible *bitter-sweet,* brevity is the great indispensable. For this reason I had at first idiated only three Cantos, but the Censors of the press had *stoled* nearly one Canto, so I made four of it; but still I am not quite certain if so many interruptions may not have given to the poem some incoherence as a whole.

While I was writing the fourth Canto I was continually receiving and writing letters. They inspired me with the hope of soon seeing the Countess. The possibility increased. I could stand upon punctilios no longer. I told my friend Gori where I was going, and feigning a trip to Venice, set out for Germany the 4th of August, a day, which, alas! will always bring to me bitter remembrances. For while with a joyful heart I was leaving to rejoin her, I knew not that in embracing my dear and inestimable Gori for a separation I intended should last only six weeks, I was leaving him forever. I cannot speak or think of it, even now, after so many

years, without bursting into tears. But I will spare my tears here, for I have given vent to them in another place where I have tried to honor his memory.

I now started on my journey, and taking the delightful and picturesque road I always traveled from Pistoja to Modena, I rapidly passed Mantua, Trent, and Inspruck, and went on through Suabia to Colmar, a city of upper Alsace, on the left bank of the Rhine. Near this city I at last found her whom I had sought and longed for during a separation of more than sixteen months. I accomplished the entire journey in twelve days, and yet I scarcely seemed to move, however fast I traveled. I opened a more abundant vein of rhyme during this journey than ever before, and in spite of myself composed three or four sonnets every day, being nearly transported out of myself in following her steps over the same road the whole distance, continually learning in answer to my inquiries that she had passed about two months before. With a heart, at times joyous, I began to think of joyous verses, and I wrote a chapter to Gori, giving him the necessary instructions for the care of my beloved horses, this being my *third* passion. I should have been ashamed to say my *second*, as I ought to give the Muses the preference over Pegasus.

On the 16th of August I saw the Countess! Two months flew by like lightning. Having once more a liberated heart, soul, and genius, fifteen days had not passed from the hour I recovered back my life in her presence, than I who for two years had not even dreamed of ever again writing tragedies, for I had cast aside the buskin when I finished my Saul, firmly resolved to write no more—now found I had almost without knowing it idiated three other tragedies at one stroke —Agis, Sophonisba, and Myrra.

These three new tragic creations inflamed my love of glory, which I only longed for, that I might share it with her, who was still dearer to me. I had now for a month passed my days joyously occupied, and free from all disturbing care, except from the horrible thought of being forced to another separation, in one short month. But as if this impending dread were not enough to pour infinite bitterness into the brief moments left me, cruel fortune dashed another bitter drop into my cup, to poison this fleeting pleasure. Letters from

Siena, in the space of eight days, brought me first the news of the death of a younger brother of my dear Gori, and his own serious indisposition—and soon after I heard of his own death, after an illness of only six days. Had I not been with her I loved, when this unexpected bolt struck, the effects of my grief would have been more terrible. But it steals away a part of our sorrow, when we have one to weep with us. She knew my dear Francesco Gori, and she loved him well. The year before, after accompanying me to Genoa he went to Rome, almost entirely to become acquainted with her, and during several months they were frequently together—every day he used to accompany her in her visits to the works of art, of which he was an ardent lover and an exquisite critic. In weeping then with me, she not only wept for my sake, but for his, for she well knew his value. This calamity disturbed beyond measure the rest of the brief time we remained together, and as the fatal day of separation approached, this new parting seemed the more bitter and insupportable. The dreaded day at last came, and I bowed to my lot—well knowing when I parted from her, I was entering into the deep shades of loneliness and sorrow—torn from her, for I knew not how long, and deprived of my friend by a blow, which had fallen once and forever. At every step of the same road, over which incoming grief and dark thoughts had all been chased away, now in my retracing it, they rolled over me again, with redoubled horror. Overcome by sorrow, I wrote but little, and wept continually, till I reached Siena, where I arrived in the early part of November. Many friends of *my* friend, who loved me for his sake as I did them, for the first few days increased my grief, gratifying but too well my desire to know all the painful particulars of this sad calamity,—but while I dreaded to hear them, I was constantly asking of them the relation.

As may easily be believed, I returned no more to lodge in that house of weeping, and I have never visited it since. From my return from Milan, the year before, I had accepted from the good heart of my friend, a sunny and solitary apartment in his house, and there we lived like brothers.

But to stay in Siena without Gori, I could not. I tried by a change of place and scene to assuage my grief a little, with-

out allowing his memory to fade from my heart. So in November I went to Pisa with the intention of passing the winter, waiting till a better fate should restore me to myself —for deprived of every resource of moral life, I could not feel myself alive.

The Countess had set out from Bologna in the month of April, and journeyed on towards Paris. Wishing to return to Rome no more, she could in no place so conveniently settle as in France, where she had relations, friends, and interests. She remained at Paris till the latter part of August, and then returned to Alsace, to the same villa where we had met before. In the early part of September, with infinite joy and speed, I set out on my accustomed route, by the Tyrolese Alps.

I had now passed more than five months at the villa in a continual intellectual fever. It was my custom immediately after waking in the morning very early to write five or six pages to my lady; afterwards I worked till two or three in the afternoon; then I took a ride on horseback or in the carriage for two hours, while, instead of amusing and reposing myself, I was constantly thinking of my verses or my characters, thus wearying my intellect more than I refreshed myself by the exercise. In April I was seized with a violent attack of the gout through my shoulders, which for the first time nailed me to the bed, where I was kept without moving, and in great distress for at least fifteen days—a sad interruption to my studies so warmly resumed. But I had undertaken too much to live solitary and confined to books, nor could I without my horses have endured it so long, for they forced me to exercise in the open air. But even with them that perpetual increasing tension of the fibers of the brain could not last. And if the gout, more wise than I, had not effected a truce, I should have ended either with a delirium of the brain, or breaking down my physical constitution, for I had reduced my diet and sleep to the last extreme. But in May, thanks to my abstemious diet and perfect repose, I almost recovered. Some peculiar circumstances having prevented my lady from returning just then to the villa, and being obliged to defer the consolation of seeing her, I was overshadowed by a dark cloud which rested upon my spirit for more than three months,

which interrupted my studies till the end of August, when my longed for companion returned once more, and all my griefs and sad feelings flew away. Recovering my intellectual and physical health, I gave to oblivion all the sorrows of this separation, which for my good fortune was to be the *last*, and immediately resumed my labors with vigor and enthusiasm. I pursued them so warmly that by the middle of December, when we set out together for Paris I had versified Agis, Sophonisba and Myrra, extended the two Bruti, and written the first Satire. I did nine years before in Florence idiated and distributed the subjects of this new kind of composition, and had also at the same time attempted their execution, but lacking both the mastership of language and rhyme, I failed in my undertaking, so that being doubtful of ever succeeding in this style of verse, I had nearly thrown the idea aside. But the inspiring presence of the Countess had restored my ardor and courage, and setting myself to work I seemed to have succeeded at least in entering the lists, if not in running the course. Before I set out for Paris I collected all my rhymes, and found I had enough and perhaps too many.

(1787.) After an uninterrupted residence of fourteen months in Alsace, I started with the Countess for Paris. I hated that city, but her presence made it a paradise. I was uncertain how long I should remain, and I left my beloved horses at the villa in Alsace, taking with me only some books and my manuscripts. At first the roar and the stench of that great chaos saddened me after so long a *villeggiatura*. Besides being lodged far from the Countess, and a thousand other disturbing causes which disgusted me beyond measure with that great Babylon, would have driven me off very quickly had I lived within and for myself. But this had not been the case for many years—I yielded with sadness to necessity, and sought to derive at least some advantage.

In February (1788) my lady received the news of the death of her husband, at Rome, where he had retired from Florence, more than two years before. And although this event had been anticipated for a long time, in consequence of his repeated violent attacks, and it left a widow in perfect freedom without the loss of a friend in the husband; yet, to my astonishment, I saw she was affected by a grief she could not have

feigned or exaggerated; for no art ever entered into that spotless and incomparable character. And that same husband, despite the great disparity of their years, would have found in her an excellent companion and a friend, if not a loving wife, had he not so embittered her life, by his revolting, rough, and dissolute habits. I owed this testimony to simple truth. I continued the printing through '88; and being near the close of the fourth volume, I extended my essay upon all the tragedies, to insert afterwards at the end of the edition. I had, during the same year, at Kehl, finished printing the Odes, the Dialogue, Etruria, and the Rhymes.

(1790.) I have now for more than a year been a silent spectator of the progress of all the sad effects of the learned folly of this nation, where everybody can gabble but nobody ever conduct a matter to a happy result, for the simple reason that they do not understand the practical government of men, as our political prophet Machiavelli long ago shrewdly observed. And over this matter I deeply lament, for I continually see the sacred and sublime cause of Liberty betrayed, mistaken, and reduced to scorn by these false philosophers. I am nauseated at the daily spectacle of so many false lights, so many half crimes, and nothing genuine except the folly of all parties. I am discouraged, finally, at seeing military power, lawless insolence and licentiousness, blindly substituted for the foundations of liberty. I now should desire nothing else but to be able to fly forever from this fetid hospital, which is made up of the incurable and the insane; and I should to-day be out of it had not the better part of myself unfortunately been placed in embarrassing circumstances. I have now, for almost a year after finishing my tragedies, been vegetating rather than living, petrified by perpetual doubts and fears, passing my days wretchedly, and making my brain sterile by three years of continual printing and correcting, nor have I or can I turn myself to any laudable occupations. I have in the meantime received, and am constantly receiving, notices from many quarters, where the edition of my tragedies arrived, and it seems that they find sale and favor. But as the news I receive comes either from my friends or kind-hearted individuals, I do not allow myself to be greatly flattered by it. And, in fact, I am deter-

mined to pay no regard either to praise or censure, where it is unaccompanied by the reasons for such an opinion, and I wish the reasons luminous too, that they may be of some service to my art and myself. But of these reasons too little by far can be comprehended, and till now no one has arrived, so that all the rest I consider as though it had never happened. And although I knew all these things before, yet they have not caused me to spare either time or fatigue to do as well as I could. So much the more honor, perhaps, will be offered to my memory, since with this sad consciousness I have resolutely persevered in doing well what I have done, rather than executing it rapidly, as I never submit to pay homage and court except to the truth.

(1791.) We set out towards the close of April for London, and having an intention to remain there some time, we took with us our horses, and gave up our house in Paris. In a few days we were in London. The Countess was not pleased with everything she saw, and I had grown old not a few years since my two former visits. I had still some admiration for the government, but the climate and the artificial manner of life, I found more intolerable than ever—always at the table —out of bed till two or three in the morning—a life at war with letters, genius, and health. I began to feel once more twinges of the gout which in that blessed Island is absolutely indigenous, and when the first novelty was over the Countess was anxious to quit the country.

In June, occurred the well known flight of the French king, who was seized in Varennes, as every one had foreseen, and conducted back to Paris more of a prisoner than ever. This event embroiled still more the affairs of France, and we both felt the greatest solicitude for our pecuniary interests. More than two thirds of our investments were in France, where the scarcity of money had given origin to a fictitious and suspicious paper that flooded the country, so that one found his property dwindling away in his own hands every week; at first a third, then half, then two thirds, and finally to almost nothing. Saddened by this circumstance, and forced by necessity, we bowed to our lot, and returned to France, the only place where our bad paper (shin-plasters) would pass, but with a prospect of seeing still worse times. Before leaving

England we made a tour of the Island, visiting Bath, Bristol, and Oxford, and returning to London, embarked at Dover.

Here I encountered an incident of romance I will briefly relate. During my third visit to England in '83 and '84, I had never learned or inquired a word about that notorious Signora who had made me, in my second visit, jeopardize so many verses. I had only heard incidentally that she no longer lived in London, that her husband, from whom she had been divorced, was dead, and that she was supposed to have married another, obscure and unknown. But during this fourth visit for more than four months while in London, I had not heard a word, nor made an inquiry about her. In fact, I knew not whether she was dead or alive. In going on board the vessel at Dover a few minutes before embarking to see that all was right, who should I see among the crowd around the pier but that same *character!* I recognized her immediately. She was still perfectly beautiful, and twenty years had scarcely changed her. It seemed like a dream. I looked again, and a smile on her face while she gazed at me convinced me it was a reality. I cannot tell how I felt. She said not a word. I entered the ship and waited for the Countess. She arrived in a quarter of an hour, and we weighed anchor. She told me that the gentleman who had accompanied her on board had pointed out the same lady and given her name, adding some outlines of her past and present life. I related the manner in which we had met, and the facts as they were, for between the Countess and myself, no deceit, diffidence, contempt, or quarrels, ever existed.

Not a little affected by so unexpected a sight, I gave vent to my feelings in a letter to her which I sent to the banker of Dover to be consigned into her own hands, and he was to forward me the answer at Brussels where I should arrive in a few days. My letter, of which I regret not having retained a copy, was certainly full of excited feelings, not of love, but of a true and deep commotion of heart at seeing her still leading a wandering life, so ill becoming her station and birth, and the increased pain I felt in thinking I had been, however unwillingly, either the cause or the pretext of it all. She might have escaped the scandal of which I had been the cause, had she not revealed it by her own imprudence, and

afterwards retrieved her character in after years. Four weeks after, her answer reached me at Brussels. It showed an obstinately confirmed bad character, rarely met with in the fair sex. At Calais we determined to make a tour through the United Provinces before we went back to our French prison. Another opportunity might never be presented for seeing a country so filled with monuments of industry. We followed the coast along to Bruges and Ostend, and then on to Anverse, Rotterdam, Holland, the Hague, and North Holland, for three weeks. The last of September we returned to Brussels where the Countess met her sisters and mother, and remained a week. Finally, towards the close of October, we again entered once more this *Great Sink* where our straitened circumstances drew us contrary to our will, and constrained us to think seriously of fixing our permanent abode.

(1792.) Nearly two months were consumed or rather wasted in finding and furnishing a beautiful and commodious house. Every day we hoped a new and more tolerable state of things would succeed, but oftener still we despaired of that time ever coming. In this state of perturbation, like everybody else in Paris and in France who had anything to lose, we wretchedly dragged out the days. Two years before all my books had been brought from Rome, where they had been left in 1783. I had considerably increased their number in Paris, and during this last journey through England and Holland. I now lacked nothing to make up the library I needed in my limited literary sphere. In the midst of my books and the sweet country, I lacked no domestic consolation. I only needed the cheering hope it would last. This thought disturbed every occupation, and forced me to become a translator of Virgil and Terence, as I could do nothing else. In the meantime neither during this or my former sojourn in Paris had I any inclination to become acquainted, or have any connections with any of those manufacturers of spurious liberty, for whom I felt the deepest repugnance and contempt. And even to this day, after this tragical farce has lasted more than fourteen years, I can boast of virgin purity in this respect. For I have never seen, or heard, or spoken with any one of these domineering French slaves, nor with any one of their servile creatures.

In March I received letters from my mother—they were her last. They spoke her warm and Christian affection, and her deep anxiety to see me. "You are in a country," said she, "so filled with confusion, where the exercise of the Catholic Religion is no longer free, and where all are continually trembling, and awaiting momentary disorders and misfortunes." Her words were too true, and soon it all came to pass. But when I once more approached Italy this worthy and venerated matron was no more! She passed from this life the 23d April, 1792, at the age of 70 years.

In the meanwhile the war with the Emperor, which afterwards became general and bloody, had been declared. In June an effort was made to blot out the last vestige of the name of King. The plot of the 20th June had failed—things dragged along once more sadly as before, until the memorable 10th of August, when the explosion came on. After this event took place I wasted not another day, my first and only thought being to deliver my lady from danger, and from the 12th I was overwhelmed with the confusion of getting ready to set out. The only difficulty that now remained was in obtaining passports to leave Paris and the Kingdom. But we worked with so much energy during those two or three days that by the 15th or 16th we had obtained them as foreigners, mine from the Minister of Venice, and the Countess's from the Minister of Denmark, the only foreign Ministers still near that image of a King. Afterwards with great difficulty we obtained from the session our *comunitativa,* called *"du Mont Blanc,"* and other passports, one for each individual, for ourselves, for every servant, and the *femme de chambre,* with a description of each one's stature, complexion, age, sex, and I know not what.

Thus furnished with all those slavish patents, we prepared to leave the 20th of August. But I had a just presentiment of what was going to happen, and being all prepared we anticipated the day of starting, and set out on Saturday the 18th, after dinner. At the *Barrière blanche,* our most convenient exit for Calais, towards which we were hastening, as the nearest point of escape from the kingdom, we found three or four of the National Guards, with an officer who gave the *visè* to our passports, and prepared to open the gates of that

immense prison, and bid us God speed on our journey. But near the *Barrière* there was a low tippling-house, from which came rushing forth some thirty *loafers*, of the lowest class, shirtless, drunken, and furious. Two carriages filled with people, loads of trunks, imperials, male and female servants! These fellows now screamed out that all the rich were flying from Paris with their treasures, and leaving the poor behind in their miseries and sorrows. An altercation then arose between the Guards and this band of bloody thieves, the former insisting upon our going on, the latter upon stopping us. I leaped from the carriage into the midst of them, armed with my seven passports, and screamed, and yelled, and scolded worse than they—the only way to deal with Frenchmen. They read them one by one, by means of one of their number who could read, and saw the descriptions of our respective figures.

Foaming with anger and fury, reckless of our terrible danger, three times I held up my passport in my hand and cried in a loud voice, "Look at me and listen. My name is Alfieri. I am an Italian, and not a Frenchman, tall, lean, pale, red hair, here I am, examine me. I have the passports—we have obtained them from the proper authority—we wish to pass, and we will, by Heaven!" The scene lasted over half an hour. I showed good courage and that saved us. In the meantime a large crowd had gathered around the two carriages, and many of them cried out, "Let's burn the carriages"—others, "Let's stone them"—others, "They are flying—they are some of the rich nobles, let us carry them back to the city palace, and bring them to justice." At last the help of four National Guards, who put in a word for us now and then, with my furious imprecations in the voice of a town-crier, holding up and showing the passports, and above all the half an hour and more the apes tired themselves out by their gab, turned the current in our favor, and the guards beckoned me to get into the carriage again where I had left my lady, in what state can be easily imagined. I entered—the postilions mounted their horses, the gate opened, and we went forth, attended by the hisses, insults, and curses of the mob. And lucky it was too they did not insist upon taking us back to the *Hotel de Ville*, for two loaded carriages arriving in pomp with the odium of flight would have been a tempting

bait for a plebeian mob, and once brought before the thieves of the municipality we should have been plunged into prison, where, had we found ourselves the 2d September, only fifteen days afterwards, we should have figured in that brutal slaughter of so many gallant men. Two days and a half after our escape from this infernal prison we reached Calais, showing our passports perhaps forty times or more on the road. We afterwards learned that we were the first foreigners who left Paris or the Kingdom after the catastrophe of the 10th of August. At every municipality on the road where we were obliged to show our passports, those who read them remained stupified and thunderstruck at the first glance of passports printed with the name of the King *canceled.* They either did not know or had been falsely informed of what had happened at Paris, and they all trembled. These are the auspices under which we finally escaped from the country, hoping and resolving never to set foot in it again. We arrived at Calais, where we met with no difficulty in going to the frontiers of Flanders, through Gravlines, but we preferred to go on immediately to Bruxelles, where the Countess wished to repose after all her agitations a short month at the villa of her sister, and her excellent brother-in-law. We there received letters from the servants we had left in Paris, informing us that on Monday, the very day we had fixed upon to set out (20th August), but which I had so fortunately anticipated by two days, that same Session which had given us our passports had (see their stupidity and sadness) gone in a body to arrest my lady and conduct her to prison. And why? She was rich, noble and pure. To myself they did not at this time accord this honor. But not finding us, they had confiscated our horses, furniture, books, and everything. Afterwards they sequestered our incomes, and declared us *emigrated!* And then came on the catastrophe and horrid scenes of the 2d September, and we rendered our grateful thanks to Providence for having made our escape.

The sky of France became every day blacker; a new Republic was founded in blood and terror. Gainers in spite of our losses, we set out on our road to Italy the first of October, and through Aix-la-Chapelle, Frankfort, Augusta and Inspruck, we came to the Alps. We ascended them with joyful

steps, and daylight seemed to dawn over their snow-tops when we looked down into that sweet land, where is heard the "Si."—The luxury of having escaped from our prison, of traveling over these same roads with her, for whom I had so many times raced over them in seeking, the satisfaction of being able to enjoy with freedom her pure society, and under her kind auspices, once more to resume my cherished studies, made me so calm and serene, that from August till we reached Tuscany, the Muses came back to inspire me once more, and I was producing rhymes in abundance.

We at last arrived at Florence the third of November, where we have remained ever since. Here I found again the living treasure of language, which fully compensated me for all the heavy losses of every description I had sustained in France.

(1803.) Here I am then, if I do not mistake, at the end of these long and tedious chatterings. But well or badly done, all these things above referred to, I was obliged to tell. If, therefore, I have been too minute in relating them, it is because I have been too profuse in doing them. And now the two before mentioned maladies of those last two years admonish me it is time to make an end of my works and their rehearsal. So I here bring the fourth epoch to a close, being very certain I have no longer the will, nor perhaps the power of creating anything more. My design is to go on filing down both my writings and my translations during the five years and some months that are yet left of the sixty years, if God wills I should reach that point. If I live beyond it other years, I not only propose, but command myself to do nothing at all, except to continue my studies, which I shall do while I have life. And if I again take up my works, it will only be to undo or remake (in respect of elegance), but never to add an iota. The only golden treatise on old age (by Cicero) I will translate after sixty years—a work adapted to that age, and I will dedicate it to my indivisible companion with whom I have now shared all the good, and all the evil of this life, for more than thirty-five years, and with whom I will share them forever.

As to printing all these things which I find or shall find done at sixty years, I now think I shall never do it, for the fatigue is too great, as I must do it under a tyrannical gov-

ernment; and I should have too much to endure from the Censors, and this I will no more submit to. I will then leave manuscripts as neat and correct as I can of those works I wish to leave, esteeming them worthy to see the light; the rest I will burn. So I shall do with this life, reducing it down to a finished state, or burning it. But to finish now cheerfully these serious tales, and show to the reader that I have taken the first steps into the childhood of the Fifth Epoch, I will make him smile once more by confessing the last weakness of the present year, 1803. After finishing the versification of my comedies, esteeming them safely finished, I have been growing more and more confirmed in the idea of becoming quite a personage with posterity! After pursuing the study of Greek with such resolution as to have become, or at least esteem myself in some manner master at first sight of Pindar and the Tragic Poets, and more than all, the divine Homer in literal Latin Translation, and in sensible Italian, I feel some pride in reporting such a victory between the age of forty-seven and fifty-four. So it came into my head, that as every work merits its reward, I must reward myself, and this reward ought to be a decoration, an honor, and not filthy lucre, so I invented a necklace with the names of twenty-three poets ancient and modern engraved on it, with a pendent in Cameo, representing Homer, and on the back of it (now laugh, reader), a Greek distich of my own, which I will here put in my last note translated in Italian. I showed them both before-hand to my friend Caluso—the Greek to see there was no barbarism, solecism, or error of prosody in it—and the Italian to see if I had tempered in the vulgar tongue the excessive impertinence of the Greek, for it is known that in a language little understood, an author can speak more vauntingly of himself. He approved of both, and I register them here that they may not be lost.[1] I will have the necklace itself made immediately, and will make it as rich as possible in jewelry, gold, and precious stones. And when this

[1] Αντον, ποιησας, Αλφηριος, ιππε, Ομηρου
Κοιρανικης, τιμην ηλφανε θειοτεραν.

Forse inventava Alfieri un Ordin vero
Nel farsi ei stesso Cavalier di Omero.

new order shall be strung, whether it is worthy of me or not, it will at all events be an invention entirely my own, and if I am unworthy of it, an impartial posterity will award it to him who has merited it better. May we meet again, my reader, if, indeed, we do not part forever, when I, old and silly, shall talk even worse nonsense than I have done in this last chapter of my expiring manhood.

VITTORIO ALFIERI.

Florence, 14th May, 1803.

THE END

SOLOMON MAIMON

THE REMARKABLE POLISH JEW, PEASANT, AND PHILOSOPHER

1754-1800

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Eminent among philosophers, although but little recognized by the world, the Polish Jew, Solomon Maimon, has left us in his autobiography one of the most valuable records of the human intellect. Gifted with one of the keenest analytical minds in history, devoting a lifetime to the pursuit of learning, Maimon in his thought separated the absolute from the probable, and the probable from the possible, and so built up an absolutely logical theory of the universe. One of the most inspiring facts of his life is that all his clear reasoning, while convincing him of the falsity of religious forms, led him to accept more and more positively and conclusively the existence of God.

"A little learning is a dangerous thing." Although Maimon had been a brilliant Rabbi and teacher of the Talmud, yet when the elders discovered his philosophical theories they forbade him to preach. This was not because they failed to recognize his wisdom and truth, but because they feared that his pupils, less gifted than he, might learn to doubt and be unable to learn again to believe.

Maimon's record of his subsequent adventures with poverty are highly amusing, and are told with that faint caustic wit which enriches rather than embitters. Yet the chief value of his famous autobiography is his account of his childhood. It traces the growth and increased power of his mind, his instinctive struggle for truth and reason as against superstition and custom. The world has come a long, long way since those days when Maimon made for himself a religion of fact; but it has not yet overpassed the strength and brilliancy of this remarkable Polish Jew, philosopher and believer in God.

SOLOMON MAIMON'S LIFE-STORY

I

My grandfather, Heimann Joseph, was farmer of some villages in the neighborhood of the town of Mir, in the territory

of Prince Radzivil. He selected for his residence one of these villages on the river Niemen, called Sukoviborg, where, besides a few peasants' plots, there was a water-mill, a small harbor, and a warehouse for the use of the vessels that come from Königsberg, in Prussia. All this, along with a bridge behind the village, and on the other side a drawbridge on the river Niemen, belonged to the farm, which was then worth about a thousand gulden, and formed my grandfather's *Chazakah.* This farm, on account of the warehouse and the great traffic, was very lucrative. With sufficient industry and economical skill, *si mens non laeva fuisset,* my grandfather should have been able, not only to support his family, but even to gather wealth. The bad constitution of the country, however, and his own want of all the acquirements necessary for utilizing the land, placed extraordinary obstacles in his way.

My grandfather settled his brothers as tenants under him in the villages belonging to his farm. These not only lived continually with my grandfather under the pretense of assisting him in his manifold occupations, but in addition to this they would not pay their rents at the end of the year.

The buildings, belonging to my grandfather's farm, had fallen into decay from age, and required therefore to be repaired. The harbor and the bridge also had become dilapidated. In accordance with the terms of the lease the landlord was to repair everything, and put it in a condition fit for use. But, like all the Polish magnates, he resided permanently in Warsaw, and could therefore give no attention to the improvement of his estates. His stewards had for their principal object the improvement rather of their own condition than of their landlord's property. They oppressed the farmers with all sorts of exactions, they neglected the orders given for the improvement of the farms, and the moneys intended for this purpose they applied to their own use. My grandfather indeed made representations on the subject to the stewards day after day, and assured them that it was impossible for him to pay his rent, if everything was not put into proper condition according to the lease. All this, however, was of no avail. He always received promises indeed, but the promises were never fulfilled. The result was not only

the ruin of the farm, but several other evils arising from that.

As already mentioned, there was a large traffic at this place; and as the bridges were in a bad state, it happened not infrequently that these broke down just when a Polish nobleman with his rich train was passing, and horse and rider were plunged into the swamp. The poor farmer was then dragged to the bridge, where he was laid down and flogged till it was thought that sufficient revenge had been taken.

My grandfather therefore did all in his power to guard against this evil in the future. For this purpose he stationed one of his people to keep watch at the bridge, so that, if any noble were passing, and an accident of this sort should happen, the sentinel might bring word to the house as quickly as possible, and the whole family might thus have time to take refuge in the neighboring wood. Every one thereupon ran in terror out of the house, and not infrequently they were all obliged to remain the whole night in the open air, till one after another ventured to approach the house.

This sort of life lasted for some generations. My father used to tell of an incident of this sort, which happened when he was still a boy of about eight years. The whole family had fled to their usual retreat. But my father, who knew nothing of what had happened, and was playing at the back of the stove, stayed behind alone. When the angry lord came into the house with his suite, and found nobody on whom he could wreak his vengeance, he ordered every corner of the house to be searched, when my father was found at the back of the stove. The nobleman asked him if he would drink brandy, and, on the boy refusing, shouted: "If you will not drink brandy, you shall drink water." At the same time he ordered a bucketful of water to be brought, and forced my father, by lashes with his whip, to drink it out. Naturally this treatment brought on a quartan fever, which lasted nearly a whole year, and completely undermined his health.

A similar incident took place when I was a child of three years. Every one ran out of the house; and the housemaid, who carried me in her arms, hurried forth. But as the servants of the nobleman who had arrived ran after her, she quickened her steps, and in her extreme haste let me fall from her arms. There I lay whimpering on the skirt of the wood,

till fortunately a peasant passing by lifted me up and took me home with him. It was only after everything had become quiet again, and the family had returned to the house, that the maid remembered having lost me in the flight, when she began to lament and wring her hands. They sought me everywhere, but could not find me, till at last the peasant came from the village and restored me to my parents.

It was not merely the terror and consternation, into which we used to be thrown on the occasion of such a flight; to this was added the plundering of the house when deprived of its inhabitants. Beer, brandy, and mead were drunk at pleasure; the spirit of revenge even went so far at times, that the casks were left to run out; corn and fowls were carried off; and so forth.

Had my grandfather, instead of seeking justice from a more powerful litigant, rather borne the injustice, and built the bridge in question at his own expense, he would have been able to avoid all these evils. He appealed, however, persistently to the terms of his lease, and the steward made sport of his misery.

And now something about my grandfather's domestic economy. The manner of life, which he led in his house, was quite simple. The annual produce of the arable lands, pasture-lands, and kitchen-gardens, belonging to the farm, was sufficient, not only for the wants of his own family, but also for brewing and distilling. He could even, besides, sell a quantity of grain and hay. His bee-hives were sufficient for the brewing of mead. He had also a large number of cattle.

The principal food consisted of a poor kind of corn-bread mixed with bran, of articles made of meal and milk, and of the produce of the garden, seldom of flesh-meat. The clothing was made of poor linen and coarse stuff. Only the women made in these matters a slight exception, and my father also, who was a scholar, required a different sort of life.

Hospitality was here carried very far. The Jews in this neighborhood are continually moving about from place to place; and as there was a great traffic at our village, they were frequently passing through it, and of course, they had always to stop at my grandfather's inn.

The support of a numerous family along with his hospi-

tality would have had no serious effect in impairing my grandfather's circumstances, if at the same time he had introduced a better economy in his house. This, however, was the source of his misfortune.

My grandfather was in trifles almost too economical, and neglected therefore matters of the greatest importance. He looked upon it, for example, as extravagance to burn wax or tallow candles; their place had to be supplied with thin strips of resinous pine, one end of which was stuck into the chinks of the wall, while the other was lit. Not unfrequently by this means fires were occasioned, and much damage caused, in comparison with which the cost of candles was not worth taking into consideration.

The apartment, in which beer, spirits, mead, herrings, salt and other articles were kept for the daily account of the inn, had no windows, but merely apertures, through which it received light. Naturally this often tempted the sailors and carriers who put up at the inn to climb into the apartment, and make themselves drunk gratuitously with spirits and mead. What was still worse, these carousing heroes, from fear of being caught in the act, often took to flight, on hearing the slightest noise, without waiting to put in the spigot, sprang out at the holes by which they had come in, and let the liquor run as long as it might. In this way sometimes whole casks of spirits and mead ran out.

The barns had no proper locks, but were shut merely with wooden bolts. Any one therefore, especially as the barns were at some distance from the dwelling-house, could take from them at pleasure, and even carry off whole wagon-loads of grain. The sheepfold had, all over, holes, by which wolves (the forest being quite near) were able to slink in, and worry the sheep at their convenience.

The cows came very often from the pasture with empty udders. According to the superstition which prevailed there, it was said in such cases, that the milk had been taken from them by witchcraft,—a misfortune, against which it was supposed that nothing could be done.

My grandmother, a good simple woman, when tired with her household occupations, lay down often in her clothes to sleep by the stove, and had all her pockets full of money,

without knowing how much. Of this the housemaid took advantage, and emptied the pockets of half their contents. Nevertheless my grandmother seldom perceived the want, if only the girl did not play too clumsy a trick.

My grandfather was held in the place of his abode to be a rich man, which he could really have been if he had known how to make use of his opportunities; and on this account he was envied and hated by all, even by his own family, he was abandoned by his landlord, he was oppressed in every possible way by the steward, and cheated and robbed by his own domestics as well as by strangers. In short, he was *the poorest rich man* in the world.

In addition to all this there were still greater misfortunes, which I cannot here pass over wholly in silence. The pope, that is, the Russian clergyman in this village, was a dull ignorant blockhead, who had scarcely learned to read and write. He spent most of his time at the inn, where he drank spirits with his boorish parishioners, and let his liquor always be put down to his account, without ever a thought of paying his score. My grandfather at last became tired of this, and made up his mind to give him nothing more upon credit. The fellow naturally took this very ill, and therefore resolved upon revenge.

For this he found at length a means, at which indeed humanity shudders, but of which the Catholic Christians in Poland were wont to make use very often at that time. This was to charge my grandfather with the murder of a Christian, and thus bring him to the gallows. This was done in the following way: A beaver-trapper, who sojourned constantly in this neighborhood to catch beavers on the Niemen, was accustomed at times to trade in these animals with my grandfather; and this had to be done secretly, for the beaver is game preserved, and all that are taken must be delivered at the manor. The trapper came once about midnight, knocked and asked for my grandfather. He showed him a bag which was pretty heavy to lift, and said to him with a mysterious air, "I have brought you a good big fellow here." My grandfather was going to strike a light, to examine the beaver, and come to terms about it with the peasant. He however said, that this was unnecessary, that my grand-

father might take the beaver at any rate, and that they would be sure to agree about it afterwards. My grandfather, who had no suspicion of evil, took the bag just as it was, laid it aside, and betook himself again to rest. Scarcely, however, had he fallen asleep again, when he was roused a second time with a loud noise of knocking.

It was the clergyman with some boors from the village, who immediately began to make search all over in the house. They found the bag, and my grandfather already trembled for the issue, because he believed nothing else than that he had been betrayed at the manor on account of his secret trade in beavers, and he could not deny the fact. But how great was his horror, when the bag was opened, and, instead of a beaver, there was found a corpse!

My grandfather was bound with his hands behind his back, his feet were put into stocks, he was thrown into a wagon, and brought to the town of Mir, where he was given over to the criminal court. He was made fast in chains, and put into a dark prison.

At the trial my grandfather stood upon his innocence, related the events exactly as they had happened, and, as was reasonable, demanded that the beaver-trapper should be examined too. He, however, was nowhere to be found, was already over the hills and far away. He was sought everywhere. But the blood-thirsty judge of the criminal court, to whom the time became tedious, ordered my grandfather three times in succession to be brought to torture. He, however, continued steadfast in his assertion.

At last the hero of the beavers was found. He was examined; and as he straightway denied the whole affair, he also was put to the test of torture. Thereupon at once he blabbed the whole story. He declared that, some time before, he had found this dead body in the water, and was going to bring it to the parsonage for burial. The parson however had said to him, "There is plenty of time for the burial. You know that the Jews are a hardened race, and are therefore damned to all eternity. They crucified our Lord Jesus Christ, and even yet they seek Christian blood, if only they can get hold of it for their passover, which is instituted as a sign of their triumph. They use it for their passover-

cake. You will therefore do a meritorious work, if you can smuggle this dead body into the house of the damned Jew of a farmer. You must of course clear out, but your trade you can drive anywhere."

On this confession the fellow was whipped out of the place, and my grandfather set free; but the pope remained pope.

II

In this manner my grandfather lived for many years in the place where his forefathers had dwelt; his farm had become, as it were, a property of the family. By the Jewish ceremonial law the *Chazakah,* that is, the right of property in an estate, is acquired by three years' possession; and the right is respected even by Christians in this neighborhood. In virtue of this law no other Jew could try to get possession of the farm by a *Hosaphah,* that is, an offer of higher rent, if he would not bring down upon himself the Jewish excommunication. Although the possession of the farm was accompanied with many hardships and even oppressions, yet it was from another point of view very lucrative. My grandfather could not only live as a well-to-do man, but also provide richly for his children.

His three daughters were well dowered, and married to excellent men. His two sons, my uncle Moses and my father Joshua, were married likewise; and when he became old, and enfeebled by the hardships to which he had been exposed, he gave over the management of the house to his two sons in common. These were of different temperaments and inclinations, my uncle Moses being of strong bodily constitution, but inferior intelligence, while my father was the opposite; and consequently they could not work together well. My grandfather therefore gave over to my uncle another village, and kept my father by himself, although from his profession as a scholar my father was not particularly adapted for the occupations of household-management. He merely kept accounts, made contracts, conducted processes at law, and attended to other matters of the same sort. My mother, on the other hand, was a very lively woman, well disposed to all sorts of occupations. She was small of stature, and at that time still very young.

An anecdote I cannot avoid touching on here, because it is the earliest reminiscence from the years of my youth. I was about three years old at the time. The merchants, who put up constantly at the place, and especially the *shaffers,* that is, the nobles who undertook the navigation, the purchase and delivery of goods, for the higher nobility, were extremely fond of me on account of my liveliness, and made all sorts of fun with me. These merry gentlemen gave my mother, on account of her small stature and liveliness, the nickname of *Kuza,* that is, a young filly.[1] As I heard them often call her by this name, and knew nothing of its meaning, I also called her *Mama Kuza.* My mother rebuked me for this, and said, "God punishes any one who calls his mother *Mama Kuza.*" One of these *shaffers,* Herr Piliezki, used every day to take tea in our house, and enticed me to his side by giving me at times a bit of sugar. One morning while he was drinking his tea, when I had placed myself in the usual position for receiving the sugar, he said he would give it to me only on condition that I should say *Mama Kuza.* Now as my mother was present, I refused to do it. He made a sign therefore to my mother to go into an adjoining room. As soon as she had shut the door, I went to him and whispered into his ear, *Mama Kuza.* He insisted however that I should say it out loud, and promised to give me a piece of sugar for each time that it was spoken. Accordingly I said, "Herr Piliezki wants me to say *Mama Kuza;* but I will not say *Mama Kuza,* because God punishes any one who says *Mama Kuza.*" Thereupon I got my three pieces of sugar.

My father introduced into the house a more refined mode of life, especially as he traded with Königsberg in Prussia, where he procured all sorts of pretty and useful articles. He provided himself with tin and brass utensils; we began to have better meals, to wear finer clothes, than before; I was even clad in damask.

III

In my sixth year my father began to read the Bible with me. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

[1] It seems that Maimon gives a euphemistic explanation of this word, as I am told its real meaning makes much more intelligible its extreme offensiveness to his mother.

Here I interrupted my father, and asked, "But, papa, who created God?"

"God was not created by any one," replied my father; "He existed from all eternity."

"Did He exist ten years ago?" I asked again.

"O yes," my father said, "He existed even a hundred years ago."

"Then perhaps," I continued, "God is already a thousand years old?"

"Silence! God was eternal."

"But," I insisted, "He must surely have been born at some time."

"You little fool," said my father, "No! He was forever and ever and ever."

With this answer I was not indeed satisfied; but I thought "Surely papa must know better than I, and with that I must therefore be content."

On another occasion I read in the Bible the story of Jacob and Esau; and in this connection my father quoted the passage from the Talmud, where it is said, "Jacob and Esau divided between them all the blessings of the world. Esau chose the blessings of this life, Jacob, on the contrary, those of the future life; and since we are descended from Jacob, we must give up all claim to temporal blessings." On this I said with indignation, "Jacob should not have been a fool; he should rather have chosen the blessings of this world." Unfortunately I got for answer, "You ungodly rascal!" and a box on the ear. This did not of course remove my doubt, but it brought me to silence at least.

The Prince Radzivil, who was a great lover of the chase, came one day with his whole court to hunt in the neighborhood of our village. Among the party was his daughter who afterwards married Prince Rawuzki. The young princess, in order to enjoy rest at noon, betook herself with the ladies of her court, the servants in waiting and the lackeys, to the very room, where as a boy I was sitting behind the stove. I was struck with astonishment at the magnificence and splendor of the court, gazed with rapture at the beauty of the persons and at the dresses with their trimmings of gold and silver lace; I could not satisfy my eyes with the sight. My father

came just as I was out of myself with joy, and had broken into the words, "O how beautiful!" In order to calm me, and at the same time to confirm me in the principles of our faith, he whispered into my ear, "Little fool, in the other world the *duksel* will kindle the *pezsure* for us," which means, In the future life the princess will kindle the stove for us. No one can conceive the sort of feeling which this statement produced in me. On the one hand, I believed my father, and was very glad about this future happiness in store for us; but I felt at the same time pity for the poor princess who was going to be doomed to such a degrading service. On the other hand, I could not get it into my head, that this beautiful rich princess in this splendid dress should ever make a fire for a poor Jew. I was thrown into the greatest perplexity on the subject, till some game drove these thoughts entirely out of my head.

I had from childhood a great inclination and talent for drawing. True, I had in my father's house never a chance of seeing a work of art, but I found on the title-page of some Hebrew books woodcuts of foliage, birds and so forth. I felt great pleasure in these woodcuts, and made an effort to imitate them with a bit of chalk or charcoal. What however strengthened this inclination in me still more was a Hebrew book of fables, in which the personages who play their part in the fables—the animals—were represented in such woodcuts. I copied all the figures with the greatest exactness. My father admired indeed my skill in this, but rebuked me at the same time in these words, "You want to become a painter? You are to study the Talmud, and become a rabbi. He who understands the Talmud thoroughly understands everything."

This desire and faculty for painting went with me so far, that when my father had settled in H——, where there was a manor-house with some beautifully tapestried rooms, which were constantly unoccupied because the landlord resided elsewhere, and very seldom visited the place, I used to steal away from home whenever I could, to copy the figures on the tapestries. I was found once in mid-winter half-frozen, standing before the wall, holding the paper in one hand (for there was no furniture in this apartment), and with the other hand

copying the figures off the wall. Yet I judge of myself at present, that, if I had kept to it, I should have become a *great,* but not an *exact,* painter, that is to say, I sketched with ease the main features of a picture, but had not the patience to work it out in detail.

My father had in his study a cupboard containing books. He had forbidden me indeed to read any books but the Talmud. This, however, was of no avail: as he was occupied the most of his time with household affairs, I took advantage of the opportunity thus afforded. Under the impulse of curiosity I made a raid upon the cupboard and glanced over all the books.

What attracted me most powerfully was an astronomical work. In this work a new world was opened to me, and I gave myself up to the study with the greatest diligence. Think of a child about seven years of age, in my position, with an astronomical work thrown in his way, and exciting his interest. I had never seen or heard anything of the first elements of mathematics, and I had no one to give me any direction in the study: for it is needless to say, that to my father I dared not even let my curiosity in the matter be known, and, apart from that, he was not in a position to give me any information on the subject. How must the spirit of a child, thirsting for knowledge, have been inflamed by such a discovery! This the result will show.

As I was still a child, and the beds in my father's house were few, I was allowed to sleep with my old grandmother, whose bed stood in the above-mentioned study. As I was obliged during the day to occupy myself solely with the study of the Talmud, and durst not take another book in my hand, I devoted the evenings to my astronomical inquiries. Accordingly after my grandmother had gone to bed, I put some fresh wood on the fire, made for the cupboard, and took out my beloved astronomical book. My grandmother indeed scolded me, because it was too cold for the old lady to lie alone in bed; but I did not trouble myself about that, and continued my study till the fire was burnt out.

After I had carried this on for some evenings, I came to the description of the celestial sphere and its imaginary circles, designed for the explanation of astronomical phe-

nomena. This was represented in the book by a single figure, in connection with which the author gave the reader the good advice, that, since the manifold circles could not be represented in a plane figure except by straight lines, he should, for the sake of rendering them more clearly intelligible, make for himself either an ordinary globe or an armillary sphere. I therefore formed the resolution to make such a sphere out of twisted rods; and after I had finished this work, I was in a position to understand the whole book. But as I had to take care lest my father should find out how I had been occupied, I always hid my armillary sphere in a corner behind the cupboard before I went to bed.

My grandmother, who had on several occasions observed that I was wholly absorbed in my reading, but now and then lifted my eyes to look at a number of circles formed of twisted rods laid on one another, fell into the greatest consternation over the matter; she believed nothing less than that her grandson had lost his wits. She did not delay, therefore, to tell my father, and point out to him the place where the magical instrument was kept. He soon guessed what was the meaning of this. Accordingly he took the sphere in his hand, and sent for me. When I came, he asked me, "What sort of plaything is this?"

"It is a *Kadur*,"[1] I replied.

"What does it mean?" he asked.

I then explained to him the use of all the circles for the purpose of making the celestial phenomena intelligible. My father, who was a good rabbi indeed, but had no special talent for science, could not comprehend all that I endeavored to make comprehensible. He was especially puzzled, by the comparison of my armillary sphere with the figure in the book, to understand how out of straight lines circles should be evolved; but one thing he could see,—that I was sure of my business. He therefore scolded me, it is true, because I had transgressed his command to meddle with nothing beyond the Talmud; but still he felt a secret pleasure, that his young son, without a guide or previous training, had been able by himself to master an entire work of science. And with this the affair came to an end.

[1] The Hebrew word for a globe.

IV

My brother Joseph and I were sent to Mir to school. My brother, who was about twelve years old, was put to board with a schoolmaster of some repute at that time, by name Jossel. This man was the terror of all young people, "the scourge of God;" he treated those in his charge with unheard of cruelty, flogged them till the blood came, even for the slightest offense, and not infrequently tore off their ears, or beat their eyes out. When the parents of these unfortunates came to him, and brought him to task, he struck them with stones or whatever else came to hand, and drove them with his stick out of the house back to their own dwellings, without any respect of persons. All under his discipline became either blockheads or good scholars. I, who was then only seven years old, was sent to another schoolmaster.

I must now say something of the condition of the Jewish schools in general. The school is commonly a small smoky hut, and the children are scattered, some on benches, some on the bare earth. The master, in a dirty blouse sitting on the table, holds between his knees a bowl, in which he grinds tobacco into snuff with a huge pestle like the club of Hercules, while at the same time he wields his authority. The ushers give lessons, each in his own corner, and rule those under their charge quite as despotically as the master himself. Of the breakfast, lunch, and other food sent to the school for the children, these gentlemen keep the largest share for themselves. Sometimes even the poor youngsters get nothing at all; and yet they dare not make any complaint on the subject, if they will not expose themselves to the vengeance of these tyrants. Here the children are imprisoned from morning to night, and have not an hour to themselves, except on Friday and a half-holiday at the Newmoon.

As the children are doomed in the bloom of youth to such an infernal school, it may be easily imagined with what joy and rapture they look forward to their release. We, that is, my brother and I, were taken home to the great feasts; and it was on a trip of this sort, that the following incident happened, which in relation to me was very critical. My mother came once before Whitsuntide to the town where we were at

school, in order to purchase sundry articles required for the house. She then took us home with her. The release from school, and the sight of the beauty of nature which at this season displays its best attire, threw us into such ecstasy, that we fell upon all sorts of wanton fancies. When we were not far from home, my brother sprang out of the carriage, and ran forward on foot. I was going to imitate his daring leap, but unfortunately had not sufficient strength. I fell down therefore with violence on the carriage, so that my legs came between the wheels, and one of these passed over my left leg, which was thereby pitiably crushed. I was carried home half-dead. My foot became cramped, and I was wholly unable to move it.

A Jewish doctor was consulted, who had not indeed regularly studied and graduated at a university, but had acquired his medical knowledge merely by serving with a physician and reading some medical books in the Polish language, who was nevertheless a very good practical physician, and effected many successful cures. He said that at present he was provided with no medicines,—the nearest apothecary's shop was about twenty miles [1] distant,—and consequently he could prescribe nothing in the ordinary method, but that meanwhile a simple domestic remedy might be applied. The remedy was, to kill a dog and thrust into it the cramped foot; this, repeated several times, was to give certain relief. The prescription was followed with the desired result, so that after some weeks I was able to use the foot again, and by degrees I completely recovered.

I think it would not be at all amiss, if medical men gave more attention to such domestic remedies, which are used with good results in districts where there are no regular physicians or apothecaries' shops; they might even make special journeys with this end in view. I know many a case of this sort, which can be in nowise explained away. This however in passing. I return to my story.

V

My father, who, as already mentioned, traded with Königsberg in Prussia, had once shipped in a vessel of Prince Rad-

[1] That is, about 100 English miles.

zivil's some barrels of salt and herrings which he had bought there. When he came home and was going to fetch his goods, the agent, Schachna, absolutely refused to let him take them. My father then showed the bill of lading, which he had got on the shipment of the goods; but the agent tore it out of his hands, and threw it into the fire. My father found himself therefore compelled to carry on a long and costly suit, which he had to delay till the following year, when he would again make a journey to Königsberg. Here he obtained a certificate from the custom-house, showing that he had shipped the said goods in a vessel of Prince Radzivil's under the direction of Herr Schachna. On this certificate the agent was summoned before the court, but found it convenient not to make an appearance; and my father gained the suit in the first, second, and third instances. In spite of this, however, as a consequence of the wretched administration of justice in Poland at the time, my father had no power to execute this decision, and therefore from this successful suit he did not even recover the costs.

To this was added the further result, that by this suit he made Herr Schachna an enemy who persecuted him now in every possible way. This the cunning scoundrel could accomplish very well, as by all sorts of intrigues he had been appointed by Prince Radzivil steward of all his estates situated in the district of Mir. He resolved therefore on my father's ruin, and only waited for a convenient opportunity to carry out his revenge.

This he found soon; and indeed a Jew, who was named after his farm Schwersen, and was known as the biggest scoundrel in the whole neighborhood, offered him a hand. This fellow was an ignoramus, did not even understand the Jewish language, and made use therefore of Russian. He occupied himself mainly in examining the farms in the neighborhood, and he knew how to get possession of the most lucrative among them by offering a higher rent and bribing the steward. Without troubling himself in the least about the laws of the *Chazakah*, he drove the old legal farmers from their possessions, and enriched himself by this means. He thus lived in wealth and fortune, and in this state reached an advanced age.

The scoundrel had already for a long time had his eye on my grandfather's farm, and waited merely for a favorable opportunity and a plausible pretext to get possession of it himself. Unfortunately my granduncle Jacob, who lived in another village belonging to my grandfather's farm, had been obliged to become a debtor of the scoundrel to the amount of about fifty rix-dollars. As he could not clear off the debt at the time when it was due, his creditor came with some servants of the manor, and threatened to seize the cauldron, in which my granduncle's whole wealth consisted. In consternation he loaded a wagon secretly with the cauldron, drove with all haste to my grandfather's, and, without letting any of us know, hid it in the adjoining marsh behind the house. His creditor, however, who followed on his heels, came to my grandfather's, and made search all over, but could find the cauldron nowhere. Irritated at this unsuccessful stroke, and breathing vengeance against my grandfather who, he believed, had prevented his success, he rode to the town, carried to the steward an imposing present, and offered for my grandfather's farm double the rent, besides an annual voluntary present to the steward.

This gentleman, joyous over such an offer, and mindful of the disgrace which my father, a Jew, had brought upon him, a Polish noble, by the above-mentioned suit, made on the spot a contract with the scoundrel, by which he not only gave over to him this farm with all the rights pertaining to it even before the end of my grandfather's lease, but also robbed my grandfather of all he had,—his barns full of grain, his cattle, etc.,—and shared the plunder with the new farmer.

My grandfather was therefore obliged with his whole family to quit his dwelling-place in mid-winter, and, without knowing where he should settle again, to wander about from place to place. Our departure from this place was very affecting. The whole neighborhood lamented our fate. An old and faithful servant of eighty years, named Gabriel, who had carried in his arms even my grandfather as a child, insisted on going with us. Representations were made to him on the severity of the season, our unfortunate situation, and the uncertainty in which we ourselves were placed as to our future destiny. But it was of no avail. He placed himself on the road before

the gate, by which our wagons had to pass, and lamented so long that we were obliged to take him up. He did not however travel with us long: his advanced age, his grief over our misery, and the severe season gave him soon the finishing stroke. He died when we had gone scarcely two or three miles; and as no Catholic or Russian community would allow him burial in their churchyard—he was a Prussian and a Lutheran—he was buried at our expense in the open field.

VI

We wandered about therefore in the country, like the Israelites in the wilderness of Arabia, without knowing where or when we should find a place of rest. At last we came to a village which belonged to two landlords. The one part was already leased; but the landlord of the other could not lease his, because he had still to build a house. Weary of wandering in winter-time with a whole family, my grandfather resolved to take a lease of this house, which was still to be built, along with its appurtenances, and meanwhile, till the house was ready, to make shift as well as he could. Accordingly we were obliged to take up our quarters in a barn. The other farmer did all in his power to prevent our settlement in the place; but it was of no avail. The building was finished, we took possession, and began to keep house.

Unfortunately however everything went backward here; nothing would succeed. An addition came to our misfortunes in my mother's illness. Being of a very lively temperament and disposed to a life of activity, she found here the weariness of having nothing to do. This, with her anxiety about the means of subsistence, threw her into a state of melancholy, which developed at last into insanity. In this condition she remained for some months. Everything was tried for her benefit, but without success. At last my father hit upon the idea of taking her to a celebrated doctor at Novogrod, who made a specialty of curing mental disorders.

The method of cure employed by this specialist is unknown to me, because I was at the time too young to wish or be able to institute inquiries on the subject; but so much I can declare with certainty, that in the case of my mother, as well as most of his patients afflicted with the same malady, the treat-

ment was followed with success. My mother returned home fresh and healthy, and from that time she never had an attack of the same sort.

Immediately after this I was sent to school at Iwenez, about fifteen miles from our abode, and here I began to study the Talmud.

My father gave me a letter to the chief rabbi of this place, who was a relation of ours, requesting him to give me in charge to an able teacher, and to give some attention to the progress of my studies. He gave me however in charge to a common schoolmaster, and told me I was to visit him every Sabbath in order that he might examine me himself. This injunction I punctually followed; but the arrangement did not continue long; for at one of these examinations I began to dispute about my lessons and suggest difficulties, when, without replying to them, the chief rabbi asked me if I had stated these difficulties to my teacher also.

"Of course," I replied.

"And what did he say?" asked the chief rabbi.

"Nothing to the point," I replied, "except that he enjoined silence on me, and said, 'A youngster must not be too inquisitive; he must see to it merely that he understands his lesson, but must not overwhelm his teacher with questions.' "

"Ah!" said the chief rabbi, "your teacher is altogether too easy, we must make a change. I will give you instruction myself. I will do it merely out of friendship, and I hope that your father will have as little to say against it as your former teacher. The fee which your father pays for your education, will be given to your teacher without deduction."

In this way I got the chief rabbi for a teacher. He struck out a way of his own with me. No weekly lessons repeated till they are impressed on the memory, no tasks which the pupil is obliged to perform for himself, and in which the course of his thoughts is very often arrested for the sake of a single word or a figure of speech, which has little to do with the main subject. His method distinguished itself from all this. He made me explain something from the Talmud *ex tempore* in his presence, conversed with me on the subject, explained to me so much as was necessary to set my own mind in activity, and by means of questions and answers turned my attention

away from all side-issues to the main subject, so that in a short time I passed through all the three above-mentioned stages in the study of the Talmud.

My father, to whom the chief rabbi gave an account of his plan with me and of my progress, went beside himself with joy. He returned his warmest thanks to this excellent man for putting himself to so much trouble with me out of mere friendship, and that notwithstanding his delicate state of health, for he was consumptive. But this joy did not last long; before a half year was ended, the chief rabbi had to betake himself to his fathers, and I was left like a sheep without a shepherd.

This was announced to my father, who came and fetched me home. Not, however, to H——, from which I had been sent to school, but to Mohilna, about six miles from H——, whither my father had meanwhile removed.

VII

My mother, notwithstanding her unwearied activity, was able to make only a very sorry provision for the family. Accordingly my father was obliged to seek, in addition to his other duties, a position as teacher, in which he carried on my education; and I must confess that in this connection I gave him, on the one hand, much joy, but, on the other hand, not a little vexation. I was then indeed only about nine years old; still, I could not only understand the Talmud and its commentaries correctly, but I even took delight in disputing about it, and in this I felt a childish pleasure in triumphing over my honest father, whom I thereby threw into no small perplexity.

The arendant and my father lived together like neighbors; that is, they envied and hated each other. The former looked on my father as a vagrant, who had forced himself upon him, and disturbed him in his undivided possession of the advantages of the place. My father took the arendant for a wealthy blockhead, who, against the consent which he had granted, which my father might have dispensed with altogether and had sought merely from the love of peace, endeavored in every way to restrict him and to narrow his rights, notwithstanding the fact that he received actual advantages from his

settlement. For from this time Mohilna had acquired a sort of independence, by means of which the arendant was spared many expenses and depreciations. There was also a small synagogue erected, and my father took the position of chief rabbi, preacher, and director of the conscience, as he was the only scholar in the place. He lost, indeed, no opportunity of representing all this to the arendant, and making complaints of his conduct; but unfortunately this was of little use.

I must take this opportunity of mentioning the only theft which I ever perpetrated in my life. I often went to the house of the arendant, and played with his children. Once, when I entered a room and found no one there, it being summer and the people of the house all busy out of doors, I spied in an open closet a neat little medicine-box which appeared to me uncommonly charming. When I opened it, I found, to my very great sorrow, some money in it; for it belonged to one of the children of the house. I could not resist the desire to carry off the little box; but to take the money seemed to me in the highest degree shameful. But when I considered that the theft would be all the more easily discovered if I put the money out, full of fear and shame I took the box as it was and thrust it in my pocket. I went home with it, and buried it very carefully. The night following I could not sleep, and was disquieted in conscience, especially on account of the money. I resolved, therefore, to take it back; but in regard to the little box, I could not conquer myself: it was a work of art, the like of which I had never seen before. The next day I emptied the box of its contents, slunk with them into the room already mentioned, and waited for an opportunity when nobody was there. I was already engaged in smuggling the money into the closet; but I had so little skill in doing this without noise and with the necessary dispatch, that I was caught in the act, and forced to a confession of the whole theft. I was obliged to dig up again the valuable work of art,—it must have cost about a quarter of a groschen,—to return it to its owner, little Moses, and to hear myself called *thief* by the children of the house.

Another incident, which happened to me and had a comical issue, was the following. The Russians had been quartered for some time in Mohilna, and as they obtained new mount-

ings, they were allowed to sell the old. My eldest brother Joseph and my cousin Beer applied to Russian acquaintances of theirs, and received in a present some brass buttons, which, being considered a fine decoration, they got sewed on to their hose instead of the wooden buttons they had before. I also was delighted with the decoration; but as I had not the skill to furnish myself by my own diligence, I was compelled to make use of force. I applied, therefore, to my father, and demanded that Joseph and Beer should be required to share their buttons with me. My father, who, indeed, was extremely fair, but still was fond of me above everything, said that the buttons were, of course, the rightful property of their owners, but that, as these had more than they required for their own wants, it was but fair that they should give me some of those that they did not require. To my commendation and their confusion he added the passage of the Bible, "The ungodly provideth, and the righteous putteth it on." This decision had to be carried out in spite of the protest of Joseph and Beer; and I had the pleasure of also shining in brass buttons on my hose.

Joseph and Beer however could not get over their loss. They complained loudly of the impious wrong which had been done to them. My father, who wished to get rid of the affair, told them therefore, that, as the buttons had been already sewed on to Solomon's hose, they must not use force, but that, if they could get them back again by stratagem, they were at liberty to do so. Both were pleased with this decision. They came to me, looked at my buttons, and both at once exclaimed in astonishment, "Oh! what is that we see? Buttons sewed on to cloth hose with linen instead of hemp thread! They must be taken off at once." While they were speaking, they took off all the buttons, and went off with joy over their successful stratagem. I ran after them, and demanded that they should sew the buttons on again; but they laughed me to scorn. My father said to me smiling at this, "Since you are so credulous, and allow yourself to be deceived, I cannot help you any longer; I hope you will be wiser in the future." With this the affair came to an end. I was obliged to content myself with wooden buttons, and to have often repeated to my mortification by Joseph and Beer,

the biblical passage, which my father had used to my advantage, "The ungodly provideth, and the righteous putteth it on."

VIII

In my youth I was very lively, and had in my nature a good deal that was agreeable. In my passions I was violent and impatient. Till about my eleventh year, as I had the benefit of a very strict education, and was kept from all intercourse with women, I never traced any special inclination towards the fair sex. But an incident produced in me a great change in this respect.

A poor, but very pretty, girl about my own age was taken into our house as a servant. She charmed me uncommonly. Desires began to stir in me, which till this time I had never known. But in accordance with the strict rabbinical morals, I was obliged to keep on my guard against looking on the girl with attentive gaze, and still more against speaking with her, so that I was able only now and then to throw at her a stolen glance.

It happened once however that the women of the house were going to bathe, which by the usage of the country they are accustomed to do two or three times a week. By chance my instinct drove me without reflection towards the place where they bathed; and there I suddenly perceived this beautiful girl, as she stepped out of the steam-bath and plunged into the river flowing by. At this sight I fell into a sort of rapture. After my feelings had calmed down again, being mindful of the strict Talmudic laws, I wished to flee. But I could not; I remained standing, as if rooted in the spot. As I dreaded however lest I might be surprised here, I was obliged to return with a heavy heart. From that time I became restless, was sometimes beside myself; and this state continued till my marriage.

Our neighbor, the arendant, had two sons and three daughters. The eldest daughter, Deborah, was already married. The second, Pessel, was about my age; the peasantry of the place professed to find even a certain resemblance in our features, and therefore, in accordance with all the laws of probability, conjectured that there would be a match between

us. We formed also a mutual affection. But by ill luck the youngest daughter, Rachel, had to fall into a cellar and dislocated one of her legs. She herself, indeed, completely recovered, but the leg remained somewhat crooked. The arendant then started a hunt after me; he was absolutely determined to have me for a son-in-law. My father was quite agreeable, but he wished to have for his daughter-in-law the straight-legged Pessel rather than Rachel of the crooked leg. The arendant however declared that this was impracticable, inasmuch as he had fixed on a rich husband for the elder, while the youngest was destined for me; and as my father was unable to give me anything, he was willing to provide for her richly out of his own fortune. Besides a considerable sum which he agreed to give as a portion, he was willing in addition to make me a joint-heir of his fortune, and to provide me with all necessaries the whole of my life. Moreover he promised to pay my father a fixed sum immediately after the betrothal, and not only to leave him undisturbed in his rights, but also to try and promote his domestic happiness in every possible way. The feuds between the two families were to cease from this time, and a league of friendship was to unite them for the future into one family.

Had my father lent an ear to these representations, he would without doubt have established the fortune of his house, and I should have lived with a spouse, who, it is true, had a crooked leg, but (as I found out some time afterwards when I was tutor in her family) was in other respects an amiable woman. I should thus have been freed from all cares in the midst of good fortune, and I should have been able to apply myself without hindrance to my studies. But unhappily my father rejected this proposal with scorn. He was absolutely determined to have Pessel for his daughter-in-law; and since this, as already mentioned, was impracticable, the feuds between the two families broke out afresh. But as the arendant was rich, and my father was a poor man, the latter was necessarily always the loser.

Some time afterwards another matrimonial proposal for me turned up. Mr. L—— of Schmilowitz, a learned and at the same time a rich man, who had an only daughter, was so enchanted with my fame, that he chose me for his son-in-law

without having seen me before. He began by entering into correspondence with my father on the subject, and left it to him to prescribe the conditions of the union. My father answered his letter in lofty style, made up of Biblical verses and passages from the Talmud, in which he expressed the conditions briefly by means of the following verses from the Canticles, "The thousand gulden are for thee, O Solomon, and the two hundred for those who keep his fruits." Consent was given to everything.

My father accordingly made a journey to Schmilowitz, saw his future daughter-in-law, and had the marriage-contract drawn in accordance with the terms agreed upon. Two hundred gulden were paid to him on the spot. With this, however, he was not content, but insisted that in his letter he had been obliged to limit himself to two hundred gulden merely for the sake of the beautiful verse which he did not wish to spoil; but he would not enter into the transaction at all unless he received for himself twice two hundred gulden (fifty thalers in Polish money). They had therefore to pay him two hundred gulden more, and to hand over to him the so-called little presents for me, namely, a cap of black velvet trimmed with gold lace, a Bible bound in green velvet with silver clasps, etc. With these things he came home full of joy, gave me the presents, and told me that I was to prepare myself for a disputation to be held on my marriage day, which would be in two months' time.

Already my mother had begun to bake the cakes she was expected to take with her to the wedding, and to prepare all sorts of preserves; I began also to think about the disputation I was to hold, when suddenly the mournful news arrived that my bride had died of smallpox. My father could easily reconcile himself to this loss, because he thought to himself that he had made fifty thalers by his son in an honorable way, and that now he could get fifty thalers for him again. I also, who had never seen my bride, could not particularly mourn her loss; I thought to myself, "The cap and the silver-clasped Bible are already mine, and a bride will also not be awanting long, while my disputation can serve me again." My mother alone was inconsolable about this loss. Cakes and preserves are of a perishable nature and will not keep long. The labor

which my mother had expended was therefore rendered fruitless by this fatal accident; and to this must be added, that she could find no place to keep the delicious cakes from my secret attacks.

IX

Meanwhile the domestic circumstances of my father became every day worse. He saw himself, therefore, compelled to make a journey to the town of Nesvij, and apply for a position as teacher there, whither I also had to follow him. Here he opened under favorable conditions a school of his own, in which he could employ me as assistant.

A widow, celebrated for her superior talents, as well as for her Xanthippe-like character, kept a public-house at the extremity of one of the suburbs. She had a daughter who yielded to her in none of the above-mentioned qualities, and who was indispensable to her in the management of the house. Madam Rissia, (this was the widow's name), excited by my constantly increasing reputation, fixed on me as a husband for her daughter Sarah. Her family represented to her the impossibility of carrying out this plan; first, my father's pride, and the demands which he would therefore make, and which she could never satisfy; then my fame, which had already excited the attention of the most prominent and wealthy people of the town; and finally, the moderate character of her own fortune, which was far from sufficient to carry out such a proposal. All these representations, however, were of no avail with her. She had once for all taken it into her head, to have me for a son-in-law, let it cost her what it might; and she thought, the devil would needs be in it, if she could not get the young man.

She sent a proposal to my father, let him have no rest the whole time he was in the town, discussed the matter with him herself on various occasions, and promised to satisfy all his demands. My father, however, sought to gain time for deliberation, and to put off the question for a while. But the time came when we were to return home. My father went with me to the widow's house, which was the last on our road, in order to wait for a conveyance which started from that place. Madam Rissia made use of the opportunity, began to

caress me, introduced my bride, and asked me how I was pleased with her. At last she pressed for a decisive answer from my father. He was still always holding back, however, and sought in every possible way to represent the difficulties connected with the subject.

While they were thus treating with one another, suddenly there burst into the room the chief rabbi, the preacher, and the elders of the place, with many of the most respectable people. This sudden appearance was brought about without any magic in the following way. These gentlemen had been invited to a circumcision at the house of a prominent man in this very suburb. Madam Rissia, who knew this very well, sent her son at once to the house with an invitation to the whole company to come, immediately after rising from table, to a betrothal at her house. They came therefore half intoxicated; and as they believed nothing else than that all the preliminaries of the marriage-contract had been settled, and that nothing was awanting but to write out and subscribe the contract, they sat down to table, set my father in the midst, and the chief rabbi began to dictate the contract to the scribe of the community.

My father assured them that on the main point nothing had yet been decided, and that still less had the preliminary articles been settled. The chief rabbi fell into a passion at this, for he supposed that it was only a quibble, and that his sacred person and the whole honorable company were being made sport of. He turned therefore to the company, and said with a haughty air, "Who is this Rabbi Joshua, who makes himself of so much consequence?" My father replied, "The Rabbi is here superfluous. I am, 'tis true, a common man; but I believe, no man can dispute my right to care for the welfare of my son, and to place his future happiness on a firm footing."

The chief rabbi was greatly offended with the ambiguity of the expression, "The Rabbi is here superfluous." He saw clearly that he had no right to lay down laws to my father in the matter, and that it was a piece of rashness on the part of Madam Rissia to invite a company to a betrothal before the parties were agreed on the preliminary articles. He began therefore to strike a lower tone. He represented to my

father the advantages of this match, the high ancestry of the bride, (her grandfather, father, and uncle, having been learned men, and chief rabbis), her personal attractions, and the willingness and ability of Madam Rissia to satisfy all his demands.

My father, who in fact had nothing to say against all this, was compelled to yield. The marriage-contract was made out, and in it Madam Rissia made over to her daughter her public-house with all its belongings as a bridal portion, and came under an obligation also to board and clothe the newly-married couple for six years. Besides I received as a present the entire work of the Talmud with its appurtenances, together worth two or three hundred thalers, and a number of other gifts. My father came under no obligation at all, and in addition received fifty thalers in cash. Very wisely he had refused to accept a bill for this sum; it had to be paid to him before the betrothal.

After all this had been arranged, there was a capital entertainment, and the brandy bottle was vigorously plied. The very next day my father and I went home. My mother-in-law promised to send after us as soon as possible the so-called little presents and the articles of clothing for me, which in the hurry she had not been able to get ready. Many weeks however passed without our hearing or seeing anything of these. My father was perplexed about this; and as the character of my mother-in-law had long been suspicious to him, he could think nothing else than that this intriguing woman was seeking some subterfuge to escape from her burdensome contract. He resolved therefore to repay like with like.

The following circumstance strengthened him in this resolve. A rich arendant, who used to bring spirits to Nesvij for sale, and to lodge in our house on his journey through Mohilna, likewise cast his eye upon me. He had an only daughter, for whom he fixed on me in his thoughts as a husband. He knew however what difficulties he would have to overcome, if he were to treat on the subject directly with my father. He chose therefore an indirect way. His plan was to make my father his debtor; and as his critical circumstances would make it impossible for him to clear off the debt, he expected to force him, as it were, to consent to this union with

the view of wiping out the debt by means of the amount stipulated for the son. He offered my father therefore some barrels of spirits on credit, and the offer was accepted with delight.

As the date of payment approached, Hersch Dukor (this was the name of the arendant) came and reminded my father. The latter assured him, that at the moment he was not in a position to clear off the debt, and begged him to have patience with him for some time yet. "Herr Joshua," said the arendant, "I will speak with you quite frankly on this matter. Your circumstances are growing daily worse; and if no fortunate accident occurs, I do not see any possibility of your being able to clear off your debt. The best thing for us both therefore is this. You have a son, and I have a daughter who is the sole heiress of all my property. Let us enter into an alliance. By this means not only will your debt be wiped out, but a sum to be fixed by yourself will be paid in addition, and I shall take a general care to improve your circumstances so far as lies in my power."

No one could be more joyous over this proposal than my father. Immediately a contract was closed, in which the bride's dowry, as well as the required presents, was decided in accordance with my father's suggestion. The bill for the debt, which amounted to fifty thalers in Polish money, was returned to my father, and torn on the spot, while fifty thalers in addition were paid to him.

Thereupon my new father-in-law went on to Nesvij to collect some debts there. Unfortunately he had to lodge at my former mother-in-law's. She, being a great prattler, told him of her own accord about the good match which her daughter had made. "The father of the bridegroom," said she, "is himself a great scholar, and the bridegroom is a young man of eleven years, who has scarcely his equal."

"I also," replied the arendant, "have, thank God, made a good choice for my daughter. You have perhaps heard of the celebrated scholar, Rabbi Joshua, in Mohilna, and of his young son, Solomon: he is my daughter's bridegroom."

Scarcely had these words been spoken, when she cried out, "That is a confounded lie. Solomon is my daughter's bridegroom; and here, sir, is the marriage-contract."

The arendant then showed her his contract too; and they fell into a dispute, the result of which was that Madam Rissia had my father summoned before the court to give a categorical explanation. My father, however, did not put in an appearance, as he should have done, although she had him summoned twice.

Meanwhile my mother died, and was brought to Nesvij for burial. My mother-in-law obtained from the court an attachment on the dead body, by which its interment was interdicted till the termination of the suit. My father therefore saw himself compelled to appear in court, my mother-in-law of course gained the suit, and I became again the bridegroom of my former bride. And now to prevent any similar reversal of her plans in the future, and to take from my father all occasion for it, my mother-in-law endeavored to satisfy all his demands in accordance with her promise, clothed me from top to toe, and even paid my father for my board from the date of the betrothal to the marriage. My mother also was now buried, and we returned home again.

My second father-in-law came too, and called upon my father for the ratification of his contract. He however pointed out that it was null and void, as it contravened a previous contract, and had been made by him merely in the supposition that my mother-in-law had no intention of fulfilling hers. The arendant seemed to give an ear to these representations, to yield to necessity, and reconcile himself to his loss; but in reality he was thinking of some means to get me into his hands. Accordingly he rose by night, yoked his horses, took me in silence from the table on which I was sleeping, packed me with all dispatch into his carriage, and made off with his booty out at the gate. But as this could not be accomplished without some noise, the people in the house awoke, discovered the theft, pursued the kidnaper, and snatched me out of his hand. To me the whole incident appeared at the time like a dream.

In this way my father was released from his debt, and got fifty thalers besides as a gratuity; but I was immediately afterwards carried off by my legal mother-in-law, and made the husband of my legal bride. I must of course confess that this transaction of my father's cannot be quite justified in a

moral point of view. Only his great need at the time can in some measure serve as an excuse.

X

On the first evening of my marriage my father was not present. As he told me at my departure that he had still to settle some articles on my account, and therefore I was to wait for his arrival, I refused, in spite of all the efforts that were made, to appear that evening. Nevertheless the marriage festivities went on. We waited the next day for my father, but still he did not come. They then threatened to bring a party of soldiers to drag me to the marriage ceremony; but I gave them for an answer, that, if this were done, it would help them little, for the ceremony would not be lawful except as a voluntary act. At last, to the joy of all interested, my father arrived towards evening, the articles referred to were amended, and the marriage ceremony was performed.

Here I must mention a little anecdote. I had read in a Hebrew book of an approved plan for a husband to secure lordship over his better half for life. He was to tread on her foot at the marriage ceremony; and if both hit on the stratagem, the first to succeed would retain the upper hand. Accordingly, when my bride and I were placed side by side at the ceremony this trick occurred to me, and I said to myself, Now you must not let the opportunity pass of securing for your whole lifetime lordship over your wife. I was just going to tread on her foot, but a certain *je ne sais quoi*, whether fear, shame, or love, held me back. While I was in this irresolute state, all at once I felt the slipper of my wife on my foot with such an impression that I should almost have screamed aloud if I had not been checked by shame. I took this for a bad omen and said to myself, Providence has destined you to be the slave of your wife, you must not try to slip out of her fetters. From my faint-heartedness and the heroic mettle of my wife, the reader may easily conceive why this prophecy had to be actually realized.

I stood, however, not only under the slipper of my wife, but—what was very much worse—under the lash of my mother-in-law. Nothing of all that she had promised was fulfilled. Her house, which she had settled on her daughter

as a dowry, was burdened with debt. Of the six years' board which she had promised me I enjoyed scarcely half a year's, and this amid constant brawls and squabbles. She even, trusting to my youth and want of spirit, ventured now and then to lay hands on me, but this I repaid not infrequently with compound interest. Scarcely a meal passed during which we did not fling at each other's head, bowls, plates, spoons, and similar articles.

Once I came home from the academy extremely hungry. As my mother-in-law and wife were occupied with the business of the public-house, I went myself into the room where the milk was kept; and as I found a dish of curds and cream, I fell upon it, and began to eat. My mother-in-law came as I was thus occupied, and screamed in rage, "You are not going to devour the milk with the cream!" The more cream the better, thought I, and went on eating, without disturbing myself by her cry. She was going to wrest the dish forcibly from my hands, beat me with her fists, and let me feel all her ill-will. Exasperated by such treatment, I pushed her from me, seized the dish, and smashed it on her head. That was a sight! The curds ran down all over her. She seized in rage a piece of wood, and if I had not cleared out in all haste, she would certainly have beat me to death.

Scenes like this occurred very often. At such skirmishes of course my wife had to remain neutral, and whichever party gained the upper hand, it came home to her very closely. "Oh!" she often complained, "if only the one or the other of you had a little more patience!"

Tired of a ceaseless open war I once hit upon a stratagem, which had a good effect for a short time at least. I rose about midnight, took a large vessel of earthenware, crept with it under my mother-in-law's bed, and began to speak aloud into the vessel after the following fashion:—"O Rissia, Rissia, you ungodly woman, why do you treat my beloved son so ill? If you do not mend your ways, your end is near, and you will be damned to all eternity." Then I crept out again, and began to pinch her cruelly; and after a while I slipped silently back to bed.

The following morning she got up in consternation, and told my wife, that my mother had appeared to her in a

dream, and had threatened and pinched her on my account. In confirmation she showed the blue marks on her arm. When I came from the synagogue, I did not find my mother-in-law at home, but found my wife in tears. I asked the reason, but she would tell me nothing. My mother-in-law returned with dejected look, and eyes red with weeping. She had gone, as I afterwards learned, to the Jewish place of burial, thrown herself on my mother's grave, and begged for forgiveness of her fault. She then had the burial place measured, and ordered a wax-light as long as its circumference, for burning in the synagogue. She also fasted the whole day, and towards me showed herself extremely amiable.

I knew of course what was the cause of all this, but acted as if I did not observe it, and rejoiced in secret over the success of my stratagem. In this manner I had peace for some time, but unfortunately it did not last long. The whole was soon forgotten again, and on the slightest occasion the dance went on as before. In short, I was soon afterwards obliged to leave the house altogether, and accept a position as a private tutor. Only on the great feast-days I used to come home.

XI

In my fourteenth year I had my eldest son, David. At my marriage I was only eleven years old, and owing to the retired life common among people of our nation in those regions, as well as the want of mutual intercourse between the two sexes, I had no idea of the essential duties of marriage, but looked on a pretty girl as on any other work of nature or art, somewhat as on the pretty medicine-box that I stole. It was therefore natural that for a considerable time after marriage I could not have any thought about the fulfillment of its duties. I used to approach my wife with trembling as a mysterious object. It was therefore supposed that I had been bewitched at the time of the wedding; and under this supposition I was brought to a witch to be cured. She took in hand all sorts of operations, which of course had a good effect, although indirectly through the help of the imagination.

My life in Poland from my marriage to my emigration, which period embraces the springtime of my existence, was a

series of manifold miseries with a want of all means for the promotion of culture, and, necessarily connected with that, an aimless application of my powers, in the description of which the pen drops from my hands, and the painful memories of which I strive to stifle.

XII

By means of the instruction received from my father, but still more by my own industry, I had got on so well, that in my eleventh year I was able to pass as a full rabbi. Besides I possessed some disconnected knowledge in history, astronomy, and other mathematical sciences. I burned with desire to acquire more knowledge, but how was this to be accomplished in the want of guidance, of scientific books, and of all other means for the purpose? I was obliged therefore to content myself with making use of any help that I could by chance obtain, without plan or method.

In order to gratify my desire of scientific knowledge, there were no means available but that of learning foreign languages. But how was I to begin? To learn Polish or Latin with a Catholic teacher was for me impossible, on the one hand because the prejudices of my own people prohibited to me all languages but Hebrew, and all sciences but the Talmud and the vast array of its commentators, on the other hand because the prejudices of Catholics would not allow them to give instruction in those matters to a Jew. Moreover I was in very low temporal circumstances. I was obliged to support a whole family by teaching, by correcting proofs of the Holy Scriptures, and by other work of a similar kind. For a long time therefore I had to sigh in vain for the satisfaction of my natural inclination.

At last a fortunate accident came to my help. I observed in some stout Hebrew volumes, that they contained several alphabets, and that the number of their sheets was indicated not merely by Hebrew letters, but that for this purpose the characters of a second and a third alphabet had also been employed, these being commonly Latin and German letters. Now, I had not the slightest idea of printing. I generally imagined that books were printed like linen, and that each page was an impression from a separate form. I presumed

however that the characters, which stood in similar places, must represent one and the same letter, and as I had already heard something of the order of the alphabet in these languages, I supposed that, for example, *a*, standing in the same place as *aleph*, must likewise be an aleph in sound. In this way I gradually learnt the Latin and German characters.

By a kind of deciphering I began to combine various German letters into words; but as the characters used along with the Hebrew letters might be something quite different from these, I remained always doubtful whether the whole of my labor in this operation would not be in vain, till fortunately some leaves of an old German book fell into my hand. I began to read. How great were my joy and surprise, when I saw from the connection, that the words completely corresponded with those which I had learned. 'Tis true, in my Jewish language many of the words were unintelligible; but from the connection I was still able, with the omission of these words, to comprehend the whole pretty well.

This mode of learning by deciphering constitutes still my peculiar method of comprehending and judging the thoughts of others; and I maintain than no one can say he understands a book, as long as he finds himself compelled to deliver the thoughts of the author in the order and connection determined by him, and with the expressions which he has used. This is a mere work of memory, and no man can flatter himself with having comprehended an author till he is roused by his thoughts, which he apprehends at first but dimly, to reflect on the subject himself, and to work it out for himself, though it may be under the impulse of another. This distinction between different kinds of understanding must be evident to any man of discernment.—For the same reason also I can understand a book only when the thoughts which it contains harmonize after filling up the gaps between them.

I still always felt a want which I was not able to fill. I could not completely satisfy my desire of scientific knowledge. Up to this time the study of the Talmud was still my chief occupation. With this however I found pleasure merely in view of its form, for this calls into action the higher powers of the mind; but I took no interest in its matter. It affords exercise in deducing the remotest consequences from their

principles, in discovering the most hidden contradictions, in hunting out the finest distinctions, and so forth. But as the principles themselves have merely an imaginary reality, they cannot by any means satisfy a soul thirsting after knowledge.

I looked around therefore for something, by which I could supply this want. Now, I knew that there is a so-called science, which is somewhat in vogue among the Jewish scholars of this district, namely the Cabbalah, which professes to enable a man, not merely to satisfy his desire of knowledge, but also to reach an uncommon perfection and closeness of communion with God. Naturally therefore I burned with desire for this science. As however it cannot, on account of its sacredness, be publicly taught, but must be taught in secret, I did not know where to seek the initiated or their writings.

I learned that the under-rabbi or preacher of the place was an adept in the Cabbalah; and therefore, to attain my object, I made his acquaintance. I took my seat beside him in the synagogue, and as I observed once that after prayer he always read from a small book, and then put it back carefully in its place, I became very curious to know what sort of book this was. Accordingly, after the preacher had gone home, I went and took the book from the place where he had put it; and when I found that it was a Cabbalistic work, I went with it and hid myself in a corner of the synagogue, till all the people had gone out and the door was locked. I then crept from my hiding-place, and, without a thought about eating or drinking the whole day long, read the fascinating book till the doorkeeper came and opened the synagogue again in the evening.

Shaarei Kedushah, or *The Gates of Righteousness,* was the title of this book; and, leaving out of account what was visionary and exaggerated, it contained the principal doctrines of psychology. I did with it therefore as the Talmudists say Rabbi Meïr acted, who had a heretic for his teacher, "He found a pomegranate; he ate the fruit and threw the peel away."

In two or three days I had in this way finished the book; but instead of satisfying my curiosity, it only excited it the more. I wished to read more books of the same sort. But as

I was too bashful to confess this to the preacher, I resolved to write him a letter, in which I expressed my irresistible longing for this sacred science, and therefore entreated him earnestly to assist me with books. I received from him a very favorable answer. He praised my zeal for the sacred science, and assured me that this zeal, amid so little encouragement, was an obvious sign that my soul was derived from *Olam Aziloth* (the world of the immediate divine influence), while the souls of mere Talmudists take their origin from *Olam Jezirah* (the world of the creation). He promised, therefore, to assist me with books as far as lay in his power. But as he himself was occupied mainly with this science, and required to have such books constantly at hand, he could not lend them to me, but gave me permission to study them in his house at my pleasure.

Who was gladder than I! I accepted the offer of the preacher with gratitude, scarcely ever left his house, and sat day and night over the Cabbalistic books. Two representations especially gave me the greatest trouble. One was the *Tree,* or the representation of the divine emanations in their manifold and intricate complexities. The other was God's *Beard,* in which the hairs are divided into numerous classes with something peculiar to each, and every hair is a separate channel of divine grace. With all my efforts I could not find in these strange representations any rational meaning or explanation.

My prolonged visits however were extremely inconvenient to the preacher. He had, a short time before, married a pretty young wife; and as his modest little house consisted of a single apartment, which was at once parlor, study, and bedroom, and as I sat in it at times reading the whole night, it happened not infrequently that my elevation above the sphere of sense came into collision with his sensibility. Consequently, he hit upon a good plan for getting rid of the incipient Cabbalist. He said to me one day, "I observe that it necessarily puts you to a great deal of inconvenience to spend your time constantly away from home for the sake of these books. You may take them home with you one by one if you please, and thus study them at your convenience."

To me nothing could be more welcome. I took home one

book after another, and studied them till I believed that I had mastered the whole of the Cabbalah. I contented myself not merely with the knowledge of its principles and manifold systems, but sought also to make a proper use of these. There was not a passage to be met with in the Holy Scriptures or in the Talmud, the occult meaning of which I could not have unfolded, according to Cabbalistic principles, with the greatest readiness.

With the *Cabbalah Maasith,* or the *practical Cabbalah,* I did not succeed so well as with the theoretical. The preacher boasted, not publicly indeed, but to everybody in private, that he was master of this also. Especially he professed *roeh veeno nireh* (to see everything, but not to be seen by others), that is, to be able to make himself invisible.

About this trick I was specially anxious, in order that I might practice some wanton jokes on my comrades. More particularly I formed a plan for keeping my ill-tempered mother-in-law in check by this means. I pretended that my object was merely to do good, and guard against evil. The preacher consented, but said at the same time, that on my part certain preparations were required. Three days in succession I was to feast, and every day to say some *Ichudim.* These are Cabbalistic forms of prayer, whose occult meaning aims at producing in the intellectual world sexual unions, through means of which certain results are to be brought about in the physical.

I did everything with pleasure, made the conjuration which he had taught me, and believed with all confidence that I was now invisible. At once I hurried to the *Beth Hamidrash,* the Jewish academy, went up to one of my comrades, and gave him a vigorous box on the ear. He however was no coward, and returned the blow with interest. I started back in astonishment; I could not understand how he had been able to discover me, as I had observed with the utmost accuracy the instructions of the preacher. Still I thought I might, perhaps, unwittingly and unintentionally have neglected something. I resolved, therefore, to undertake the operation anew. This time, however, I was not going to venture on the test of a box on the ear; I went into the academy merely to watch my comrades as a spectator. As

soon as I entered, however, one of them came up to me, and showed me a difficult passage in the Talmud, which he wished me to explain. I stood utterly confounded, and disconsolate over the failure of my hopes.

Thereupon I went to the preacher, and informed him of my unsuccessful attempt. Without blushing, he replied quite boldly, "If you have observed all my instructions, I cannot explain this otherwise than by supposing that you are unfit for being thus divested of the visibility of your body." With great grief, therefore, I was obliged to give up entirely the hope of making myself invisible.

This disappointed hope was followed by a new delusion. In the preface to the *Book of Raphael,* which the angel of that name is said to have delivered to our first father Adam at his banishment from paradise, I found the promise, that whoever keeps the book in his house is thereby insured against fire. It was not long, however, before a conflagration broke out in the neighborhood, when the fire seized my house too, and the angel Raphael himself had to go up into heaven in this chariot of fire.

Unsatisfied with the literary knowledge of this science, I sought to penetrate into its spirit; and as I perceived that the whole science, if it is to deserve this name, can contain nothing but the secrets of nature concealed in fables and allegories, I labored to find out these secrets, and thereby to raise my merely literary knowledge to a rational knowledge. This, however, I could accomplish only in a very imperfect manner at the time, because I had yet very few ideas of the sciences in general.

This could not satisfy me. I wished to get an insight into the sciences, not as they are veiled in fables, but in their natural light. I had already, though very imperfectly, learned to read German; but where was I to obtain German books in Lithuania? Fortunately for me I learned that the chief rabbi of a neighboring town, who in his youth had lived for a while in Germany, and learned the German language there, and made himself in some measure acquainted with the sciences, continued still, though in secret, to work at the sciences, and had a fair library of German books.

I resolved therefore to make a pilgrimage to S——, in

order to see the chief rabbi, and beg of him a few scientific books. I was tolerably accustomed to such journeys, and had gone once thirty miles on foot to see a Hebrew work of the tenth century on the Peripatetic philosophy. Without therefore troubling myself in the least about traveling expenses or means of conveyance, and without saying a word to my family on the subject, I set out upon the journey to this town in the middle of winter. As soon as I arrived at the place, I went to the chief rabbi, told him my desire, and begged him earnestly for assistance. He was not a little astonished; for, during the thirty-one years which had passed since his return from Germany, not a single individual had ever made such a request. He promised to lend me some old German books. The most important among these were an old work on Optics, and Sturm's *Physics*.

I could not sufficiently express my gratitude to this excellent chief rabbi; I pocketed the few books, and returned home in rapture. After I had studied these books thoroughly, my eyes were all at once opened. I believed that I had found a key to all the secrets of nature, as I now knew the origin of storms, of dew, of rain, and such phenomena. I looked down with pride on all others, who did not yet know these things, laughed at their prejudices and superstitions, and proposed to clear up their ideas on these subjects and to enlighten their understanding.

But this did not always succeed. I labored once to teach a Talmudist, that the earth is round, and that we have antipodes. He however made the objection, that these antipodes would necessarily fall off. I endeavored to show that the falling of a body is not directed towards any fixed point in empty space, but towards the center of the earth, and that the ideas of Over and Under represent merely the removal from and approach to this center. It was of no avail; the Talmudist stood to his ground, that such an assertion was absurd.

On another occasion I went to take a walk with some of my friends. It chanced that a goat lay in the way. I gave the goat some blows with my stick, and my friends blamed me for my cruelty. "What is the cruelty?" I replied. "Do you believe that the goat feels a pain, when I beat it? You are

greatly mistaken; the goat is a mere machine." This was the doctrine of Sturm as a disciple of Descartes.

My friends laughed heartily at this, and said, "But don't you hear that the goat cries, when you beat it?" "Yes," I replied, "of course it cries; but if you beat a drum, it cries too." They were amazed at my answer, and in a short time it went abroad over the whole town, that I had become mad, as I held that *a goat is a drum.*

From my generous friend, the chief rabbi, I received afterwards two medical works, Kulm's *Anatomical Tables* and Voit's *Gaziopilatium.* The latter is a large medical dictionary, containing, in a brief form, not only explanations from all departments of medicine, but also their manifold applications. In connection with every disease is given an explanation of its cause, its symptoms, and the method of its cure, along with even the ordinary prescriptions. This was for me a real treasure. I studied the book thoroughly, and believed myself to be master of the science of medicine, and a complete physician.

But I was not going to content myself with mere theory in this matter; I resolved to make regular application of it. I visited patients, determined all diseases according to their circumstances and symptoms, explained their causes, and gave also prescriptions for their cure. But in this practice things turned out very comically. If a patient told me some of the symptoms of his disease, I guessed from them the nature of the disease itself, and inferred the presence of the other symptoms. If the patient said that he could trace none of these, I stubbornly insisted on their being present all the same. The conversation therefore sometimes came to this:—

I. "You have headache also."

Patient. "No."

I. "But you *must* have headache."

As many symptoms are common to several diseases, I took not infrequently *quid pro quo.* Prescriptions I could never keep in my head, so that, when I prescribed anything, I was obliged to go home first and turn up my *Gaziopilatium.* At length I began even to make up drugs myself according to Voit's prescriptions. How this succeeded, may be imagined. It had at least this good result, that I saw something more

was surely required for a practical physician than I understood at the time.

XIII

In the place where I resided I had a bosom friend, Moses Lapidoth by name. We were of the same age, the same studies, and nearly the same external circumstances, the only difference being, that at an early period I already showed an inclination to the sciences, while Lapidoth had indeed a love of speculation, and also great acuteness and power of judgment, but had no wish to proceed further than he could reach by a mere sound common sense. With this friend I used to hold many a conversation on subjects of mutual interest, especially the questions of religion and morals.

We were the only persons in the place, who ventured to be not mere imitators, but to think independently about everything. It was a natural result of this, that, as we differed from all the rest of the community in our opinions and conduct, we separated ourselves from them by degrees; but, as we had still to live by the community, our circumstances on this account became every day worse and worse. 'Tis true, we noted this fact, but nevertheless we were unwilling to sacrifice our favorite inclinations for any interest in the world. We consoled ourselves therefore, as best we might, over our loss, spoke constantly of the vanity of all things, of the religious and moral faults of the common herd, upon whom we looked down with a sort of noble pride and contempt.

We used especially to open our minds, *à la Mandeville*, on the hollowness of human virtue. For example, smallpox had been very prevalent in the place, and thereby many children had been carried off. The elders held a meeting to find out the secret sins, on account of which they were suffering this punishment, as they viewed it. After instituting an inquiry it was found, that a young widow of the Jewish people was holding too free intercourse with some servants of the manor. She was sent for, but no sort of inquisition could elicit from her anything beyond the fact, that these people were in the habit of drinking mead at her house, and that, as was reasonable, she received them in a pleasant and polite manner, but that in other respects she was unconscious of any sin in the

matter. As no other evidence was forthcoming, she was about to be acquitted, when an elderly matron came flying like a fury and screamed, "Scourge her! scourge her! till she has confessed her sin! If you do not do it, then may the guilt of the death of so many innocent souls fall upon you!" Lapidoth was present with me at this scene, and said, "Friend, do you suppose that Madam is making so fierce a complaint against this woman, merely because she is seized with a holy zeal and feeling for the general welfare? Oh no! She is enraged, merely because the widow still possesses attractions, while she herself can no longer make claim to any." I assured him that his opinion was thoroughly in accordance with my own.

Lapidoth had poor parents-in-law. His father-in-law was Jewish sexton, and by his slender pay could support his family only in a very sorry style. Every Friday the poor man was therefore compelled to listen to all sorts of reproach and abuse from his wife, because he could not provide her with what was indispensable for the holy Sabbath. Lapidoth told me about this with the addition:—"My mother-in-law wants to make me to believe that she is zealous merely for the honor of the holy Sabbath. Nay, verily; she is zealous merely for the honor of her own holy paunch, which she cannot fill as she would like; the holy Sabbath serves her merely as a pretext."

Once when we were taking a walk on the wall round the town, and conversing about the tendency of men, which is evinced in such expressions, to deceive themselves and others, I said to Lapidoth, "Friend, let us be fair, and pass our censure on ourselves, as well as on others. Is not the contemplative life which we lead, and which is by no means adapted to our circumstances, to be regarded as a result of our indolence and inclination to idleness, which we seek to defend by reflections on the vanity of all things? We are content with our present circumstances; why? Because we cannot alter them without first fighting against our inclination to idleness. With all our pretense of contempt for everything outside of us, we cannot avoid the secret wish to be able to enjoy better food and clothing than at present. We reproach our friends as vain men addicted to the pleasures of sense, because they

have abandoned our mode of life, and undertaken occupations adapted to their powers. But wherein consists our superiority over them, when we merely follow our inclination as they follow theirs? Let us seek to find this superiority merely in the fact, that we at least confess this truth to ourselves, while they profess as the motive of their actions, not the satisfaction of their own particular desires, but the impulse to general utility." Lapidoth, on whom my words produced a powerful impression, answered with some warmth, "Friend, you are perfectly right. If we cannot now mend our faults, we will not deceive ourselves about them, but at least keep the way open for amendment."

In conversations of this kind we two cynics spent our pleasantest hours, while we made ourselves merry sometimes at the expense of the world, sometimes at our own. Lapidoth, for example, whose old dirty clothes had all fallen into rags, and one of whose sleeves was wholly parted from the rest of his coat, while he was not in a position even to have it mended, used to fix the sleeve on his back with a pin, and to ask me, "Don't I look like a *Schlachziz* (a Polish noble)?" I, again, could not sufficiently commend my rent shoes, which were quite open at the toes, because, as I said, "They do not squeeze the foot."

The harmony of our inclinations and manner of life, along with some difference in our talents, made our conversation all the more agreeable. I had more talent for the sciences, made more earnest endeavors after thoroughness and accuracy of knowledge than Lapidoth. He, on the other hand, had the advantage of a lively imagination, and consequently more talent for eloquence and poetry than I. If I produced a new thought, my friend knew how to illustrate it, and, as it were, to give it embodiment in a multitude of examples. Our affection for one another went so far, that, whenever it was practicable, we spent day and night in each other's company, and the first thing we did, on returning home from the places where we severally acted as family-tutors, was to visit each other, even before seeing our own families. At last we began to neglect on this account the usual hours of prayer. Lapidoth first undertook to prove, that the Talmudists themselves offered up their prayers, not exclusively in the synagogue,

but sometimes in their study-chambers. Afterwards he pointed out also, that the prayers held to be necessary are not all equally so, but that some may be dispensed with altogether: even those, which are recognized as necessary, we curtailed little by little, till at last they were totally neglected by us.

Once, when we went for a walk on the wall during the hour of prayer, Lapidoth said to me, "Friend, what is going to become of us? We do not pray now at all."

"What do you mean by that?" I inquired.

"I throw myself," said Lapidoth, "on the mercy of God, who certainly will not punish his children severely for a slight neglect."

"God is not merely *merciful,*" I replied; "He is also *just.* Consequently this reason cannot help us much."

"What do you mean by that?" asked Lapidoth.

I had by this time obtained from Maimonides more accurate ideas of God and of our duties towards Him. Accordingly I replied, "Our destination is merely the *attainment of perfection through the knowledge of God and the imitation of His actions.* Prayer is simply the expression of our knowledge of the divine perfections, and, as a result of this knowledge, is intended merely for the common man who cannot of himself attain to this knowledge; and therefore it is adapted to his mode of conception. But as we see into the end of prayer, and can attain to this end directly, we can dispense altogether with prayer as something superfluous."

This reasoning appeared to us both to be sound. We resolved therefore, for the purpose of avoiding offense, to go out of the house every morning with our *Taleth* and *Tephilim* (Jewish instruments of prayer), not, however, to the synagogue, but to our favorite retreat, the wall, and by this means we fortunately escaped the Jewish Inquisition.

But this enthusiastic companionship, like everything else in the world, had to come to an end. As we were both married, and our marriages were tolerably fruitful, we were obliged, for the purpose of supporting our families, to accept situations as family-tutors. By this means we were not infrequently separated, and afterwards were able to spend merely a few weeks in the year together.

XIV

THE place, where I first occupied the position of family-tutor, was at the distance of a league from my residence. The family was that of a miserable farmer in a still more miserable village; and my salary was five thalers in Polish money. The poverty, ignorance, and rudeness in the manner of life, which prevailed in this house, were indescribable. The farmer himself was a man of about fifty years, the whole of whose face was overgrown with hair, ending in a dirty, thick beard as black as pitch. His language was a sort of muttering, intelligible only to the boors, with whom he held intercourse daily. Not only was he ignorant of Hebrew, but he could not speak a word of Jewish; his only language was Russian, the common patois of the peasantry. His wife and children were of the same stamp. Moreover, the apartment, in which they lived, was a hovel of smoke, black as coal inside and out, without a chimney, but with merely a small opening in the roof for the exit of the smoke,—an opening which was carefully closed as soon as the fire was allowed to go out, so that the heat might not escape.

The windows were narrow strips of pine laid crosswise over each other, and covered with paper. This apartment served at once for sitting, drinking, eating, study and sleep. Think of this room intensely heated, and the smoke, as is generally the case in winter, driven back by wind and rain till the whole place is filled with it to suffocation. Here hang a foul washing and other dirty bits of clothing on poles laid across the room in order to kill the vermin with the smoke. There hang sausages to dry, while their fat keeps constantly trickling down on the heads of people below. Yonder stand tubs with sour cabbage and red beets, which form the principal food of the Lithuanians. In a corner the water is kept for daily use, with the dirty water alongside. In this room the bread is kneaded, cooking and baking are done, the cow is milked, and all sorts of operations are carried on.

In this magnificent dwelling the peasants sit on the bare ground; you dare not sit higher if you do not wish to be suffocated with the smoke. Here they guzzle their whisky and make an uproar, while the people of the house sit in a corner.

I usually took my place behind the stove with my dirty half-naked pupils, and expounded to them out of an old tattered Bible, from Hebrew into Russian Jewish. All this together made such a splendid group as deserved to be sketched only by a Hogarth, and to be sung only by a Butler.

It may be easily imagined, how pitiable my condition here must have been. Whisky had to form my sole comfort; it made me forget all my misery.

If a Russian army passed a place, they took with them a *prowodnik,* or guide, to the next place. But instead of seeking to be supplied by the mayor or the village magistrate, they used to seize the first person whom they met on the road. He might be young or old, male or female, healthy or sick, it mattered nothing to them; for they knew the road well enough from special charts, and only sought an opportunity for outrage. If it happened that the person seized did not know the way at all, and did not show them the right road, they did not allow themselves to be sent astray on this account; they selected the road all right, but they cudgeled the poor prowodnik till he was half-dead, *for not knowing the way!*

I was once seized as a prowodnik myself. I did not indeed know the way, but luckily I hit upon it by chance. Fortunately, therefore, I reached the proper place, and the only violence I suffered, besides a good many blows and kicks from the Russian soldiers, was the threat, that, if ever I led them astray, I should certainly be flayed alive—a threat which they might be trusted with carrying into execution.

The other places which I filled as tutor were more or less similar to this.

XV

My external circumstances were becoming worse and worse. I was unwilling any longer to adapt myself to my ordinary occupations, and found myself therefore everywhere out of my sphere. On the other hand, I was also unable in the place of my abode to satisfy sufficiently my favorite inclination to the study of the sciences. So I determined to betake myself to Germany, there to study medicine and, as opportunity offered, other sciences also. But the question was, how such a long journey was to be made. I knew indeed, that some

merchants in the place of my abode were soon to make a journey to Königsberg in Prussia; but I had only a slight acquaintance with them, and could not therefore expect that they would take me with them for nothing. After much deliberation and consultation I fell at last upon a capital expedient.

I had among my friends a very learned and pious man, who stood in great esteem among all the Jews of the town. To him I revealed my purpose, and took him into counsel on the subject. I laid before him my miserable circumstances, pointed out to him, that, as my inclinations had been once directed to the knowledge of God and His works, I was no longer fit for any ordinary occupation; and I represented to him especially, that I was now obliged to support myself by my scholarship alone, as an instructor in the Bible and the Talmud, which, according to the judgment of some rabbis, was not altogether allowable. I explained to him, that on this account I wished to study medicine as a profane art, by which means I might be of service, not only to myself, but to the whole of the Jews in this neighborhood, as there was no regular physician here, and those, who gave themselves out for such, were the most ignorant shavers, who packed men out of the world by their cures.

These reasons produced an extraordinary effect on so devout a man. He went to a merchant of his acquaintance, represented to him the importance of my undertaking, and persuaded him to take me with him to Königsberg on his own vessel. The merchant could refuse nothing to so godly a man, and therefore gave his consent.

Accordingly I set out with this Jewish merchant for Königsberg in Prussia. When I arrived there, I went to the Jewish medical doctor of the place, opened to him my proposal to study medicine, and begged him for advice and support. As his professional occupations prevented him from conveniently speaking with me on the subject, and as he could not understand me well at any rate, he referred me to some students who lodged in his house. As soon as I showed myself to these young gentlemen, and opened to them my proposal, they burst into loud laughter. And certainly for this they were not to be blamed. Imagine a man from Polish

Lithuania of about five and twenty years, with a tolerably stiff beard, in tattered dirty clothes, whose language is a mixture of Hebrew, Jewish German, Polish and Russian, with their several grammatical inaccuracies, who gives out that he understands the German language, and that he has attained some knowledge of the sciences. What were the young gentlemen to think?

They began to poke fun at me, and gave me to read Mendelssohn's *Phaedo*, which by chance lay on the table. I read in the most pitiful style, both on account of the peculiar manner in which I had learned the German language, and on account of my bad pronunciation. Again they burst into loud laughter; but they said, I must explain to them what I had read. This I did in my own fashion; but as they did not understand me, they demanded that I should translate what I had read into Hebrew. This I did on the spot. The students, who understood Hebrew well, fell into no slight astonishment, when they saw that I had not only grasped correctly the meaning of this celebrated author, but also expressed it happily in Hebrew. They began therefore to interest themselves on my account, procured for me some cast-off clothing, and board during my stay in Königsberg. At the same time they advised me to go to Berlin, where I should best attain my object. To make the journey suit my circumstances, however, they advised me to go by ship from Königsberg to Stettin, and thence to Frankfurt on the Oder, from which place I should easily find means of getting to Berlin.

I went therefore by ship, and had nothing for food but some toast, some herring, and a flask of spirits. I was told in Königsberg, that the journey might take ten or, at the most, fourteen days. This prophecy, however, was not fulfilled. In consequence of contrary winds, the voyage lasted five weeks. In what circumstances, therefore, I found myself, may be easily imagined. There were in the vessel besides me no other passengers, but an old woman, who sang hymns all the time for her comfort. The Pomeranian German of the crew I could understand as little as they could my medley of Jewish, Polish and Lithuanian. I got nothing warm to eat the whole time, and was obliged to sleep on hard

stuffed bags. The vessel came also sometimes into danger. Of course the most of the time I was seasick.

At last I arrived at Stettin, where I was told that I could make the journey to Frankfurt quite pleasantly on foot. But how was a Polish Jew in the most wretched circumstances, without a pfennig to buy food, and without knowing the language of the country, to make a journey even of a few miles? Yet it had to be done. Accordingly I set out from Stettin, and as I thought over my miserable situation, I sat down under a lime-tree, and began to weep bitterly. I soon became somewhat lighter in heart; I took courage, and went on. After I had gone two or three miles, towards evening I arrived at an inn thoroughly worn out. It was the eve of the Jewish fast, which falls in August. Already I was nearly starving with hunger and thirst, and I was to fast still the whole of the next day. I had not a pfennig to spend and nothing of any value to sell.

After long reflection it occurred to me, that I must still have in my coat-pocket an iron spoon, which I had taken with me on board ship. I brought it, and begged the landlady of the inn to give me a little bread and beer for it. She refused at first to take the spoon, but after much importunity she was at last induced to grant a glass of sour beer in exchange. I was obliged therefor to content myself with this, drank my glass of beer, and went off to the stable to sleep on straw.

In the morning I proceeded on my journey, having previously inquired for a place, where there were Jews, in order that I might be able to go into the synagogue, and sing with my brethren the lamentations over the destruction of Jerusalem. This was done, and after the prayers and singing,—about midday,—I went to the Jewish schoolmaster of the place, and held some conversation with him. He soon discovered that I was a full rabbi, began to interest himself about me, and procured me a supper at the house of a Jew. He also gave me a letter of introduction to another schoolmaster in the neighboring town, recommending me as a great Talmudist and an honorable rabbi. Here also I met with a fair reception. I was invited to the Sabbath dinner by the most respectable and richest Jew of the place, and went

into the synagogue, where I was shown to the highest seat, and received every mark of honor usually bestowed on a rabbi.

After the close of the service the rich Jew referred to took me to his house, and put me in the place of honor at his table, that is between himself and his daughter. She was a young girl of about twelve years, dressed in the most beautiful style. I began, as rabbi, to hold a very learned and edifying discourse; and the less the gentleman and lady understood it, the more divine it seemed to them. All at once I observed, to my chagrin, that the young lady began to put on a sour look, and to make wry faces. At first I did not know how to explain this; but, after a while, when I turned my eyes upon myself and my miserable dirty suit of rags, the whole mystery was at once unriddled. The uneasiness of the young lady had a very good cause. And how could it be otherwise? Since I left Königsberg, about seven weeks before, I had never had a clean shirt to put on; and I had been obliged to lie in the stables of inns on bare straw, on which who knows how many poor travelers had lain before? Now all at once my eyes were opened to see my misery in its appalling magnitude. But what was I to do? How was I to help myself out of this unfortunate situation? Gloomy and sad I soon bade farewell to these good people, and proceeded on my journey to Berlin under a continued struggle with want and misery of every kind.

At last I reached this city. Here I believed that I should put an end to my misery, and accomplish all my wishes. But alas I was sadly deceived. In this capital, as is well known, no Jewish beggars were allowed. Accordingly the Jewish community of the place, in order to make provision for their poor, have built at the Rosenthaler gate a house, in which the poor are received, and questioned by the Jewish elders about what they want in Berlin. According to the results of such inquiry, they are either taken into the city, if they are sick or want employment, or they are sent forward on their journey. I was therefore conducted to this house, which was filled partly with sick people, partly with a lewd rabble. For a long while I looked round in vain for a man, with whom I might talk about my affairs.

At last I observed a man, who, to judge by his dress, was surely a rabbi. I went to him, and how great was my joy to learn from him, that he was really a rabbi, and pretty well known in Berlin! I conversed with him on all sorts of subjects connected with rabbinical learning; and as I was very open-hearted, I related to him the course of my life in Poland, revealed to him my purpose of studying medicine in Berlin, showed him my commentary on the *Moreh Nebhochim,* and so forth. He listened to all, and seemed to interest himself very much in my behalf. But all at once he disappeared out of sight.

At length towards evening came the Jewish elders. Each of the persons in the house was called, and questioned about his wants. When my turn came, I said quite frankly, that I wished to remain in Berlin, in order to study medicine. The elders refused my request point-blank, gave me a pittance in charity, and went away. The reason of this conduct towards me in particular was nothing else than the following.

The rabbi, of whom I spoke, was a zealot in his orthodoxy. Accordingly when he had discovered my sentiments and purposes, he went into town, and informed the elders about my heretical mode of thinking. He told them, that I was going to issue a new edition of the *Moreh Nebhochim* with a commentary, and that my intention was not so much to study medicine, but mainly to devote myself to the sciences in general, and to extend my knowledge. This the orthodox Jews look upon as something dangerous to religion and good morals. They believe this to be specially true of the Polish rabbis, who, having by some lucky accident been delivered from the bondage of superstition, suddenly catch a gleam of the light of reason, and set themselves free from their chains. And this belief is to some extent well-founded. Persons in such a position may be compared to a man, who, after being famished for a long time, suddenly comes upon a well spread table, who will attack the food with violent greed, and fill himself even to surfeiting.

The refusal of permission to stay in Berlin came upon me like a thunderclap. The ultimate object of all my hopes and wishes was all at once removed beyond my reach, just when I had seen it so near. I found myself in the situation of

Tantalus, and did not know where to turn for help. I was especially pained by the treatment I received from the overseer of this poorhouse, who, by command of his superiors, urged my speedy departure, and never left off till he saw me outside of the gate. There I threw myself on the ground and began to weep bitterly. It was a Sunday, and many people went, as usual, to walk outside of the city. Most of them never turned aside to a whining worm like me, but some compassionate souls were very much struck with the sight, and asked the cause of my wailing. I answered them; but, partly on account of my unintelligible language, partly because my speech was broken by frequent weeping and sobbing, they could not understand what I said.

I was so deeply affected by this vexation, that I fell into a violent fever. The soldiers, who kept guard at the gate, reported this at the poorhouse. The overseer came, and carried me in. I stayed there over the day, and made myself glad with the hope of becoming thoroughly sick, so as to enforce a longer sojourn in the place, during which I thought I might form some acquaintances, by whose influence I hoped to receive protection and permission to remain in Berlin. But alas! in this hope I was deceived. The following day I rose quite lively again without a trace of fever. I was therefore obliged to go. But whither? That I did not know myself. Accordingly I took the first road that I came upon, and surrendered myself to fate.

XVI

In the evening I came to an inn, where I met a poor tramp who was a Jewish beggar by profession. I was uncommonly pleased to meet one of my brethren, with whom I could talk, and to whom this neighborhood was pretty well known. I resolved therefore to wander about the country with this companion, and to preserve my life in this way, though two such heterogeneous persons were nowhere to be met with in the world. I was an educated rabbi; he was an idiot. I had hitherto maintained myself in an honorable way; he was a beggar by profession. I had ideas of morality, propriety, and decency; he knew nothing of these. Finally, I was in sound health, it is true, but still of weakly constitution; he, on the

other hand, was a sturdy, able-bodied fellow, who would have made the best of soldiers.

Notwithstanding these differences, I stuck close to the man, as, in order to prolong life, I was compelled to become a vagrant in a strange land. In our wanderings I labored to communicate to my companion ideas of religion and of true morality, while he in return instructed me in the art of begging. He taught me the usual formulas of the art, and recommended me especially to curse and swear, whenever I was sent away without anything. But with all the trouble, which he gave himself in the matter, his teachings would not take any hold on me. The formulas of begging appeared to me absurd I thought, if a man was once compelled to beg of others, he should express his feelings in the most simple form. As far as cursing was concerned, I could not understand why a man, who refused another's request, should draw a curse upon himself; and then it seemed to me, that the man thus treated would be thereby embittered, and the beggar be all the less likely to attain his object. When therefore I went to beg with my comrade, I conducted myself always as if I were begging and cursing at the same time, but in fact I never spoke a single intelligible word. If, on the other hand, I went alone, I had absolutely nothing to say; but from my appearance and conduct could easily be seen what was wanted. My comrade sometimes scolded me on account of my slowness in learning his art, and this I bore with the greatest patience.

In this way we wandered about in a district of a few miles for nearly half a year. At last we resolved to turn our steps towards Poland. When we arrived at Posen we took up our quarters in the Jewish poorhouse, the master of which was a poor jobbing tailor. Here I formed the resolve, at whatever cost, to bring my wandering to a close. It was harvest-time, and already began to be pretty cold. I was almost naked and barefoot. By this vagrant life, in which I never got any regular meals, for the most part had to content myself with bits of moldy bread and water, and at night was obliged to lie on old straw, sometimes even on the bare earth, my health had seriously suffered. Besides, the sacred seasons and fast-days in the Jewish calendar were coming on; and as at that time I was of a somewhat strong religious disposition, I could

not endure the thought of passing in complete idleness this period which others employed for the welfare of their souls.

I resolved, therefore, for the present at least, to go no farther, and, at all events if it should come to the worst, to throw myself before the synagogue, and either die there or excite the compassion of my brethren, and by that means bring my sufferings to an end. Consequently as soon as my comrade awoke in the morning, began to make arrangements for a begging tour, and summoned me to the same, I told him that I would not go with him at present; and when he asked how I intended to sustain life in any other way, I was able to answer nothing but "God will surely help."

I then went off to the Jewish school. Here I found a number of scholars, some of whom were reading, while others took advantage of the master's absence to pass the time in play. I also took a book to read. The scholars, who were struck by my strange dress, approached and asked me whence I came and what I wanted. Their questions I answered in my Lithuanian dialect, at which they began to laugh, and make merry at my expense. For this I cared little. But I recollected that, some years before, a chief rabbi from my neighborhood had been appointed to the same office in Posen, and that he had taken with him an acquaintance and a good friend of mine as his secretary. Accordingly I asked the boys about this friend. To my extreme grief I learned that he was no longer in Posen, as the chief rabbi had been afterwards promoted to the same office in Hamburg, and his secretary had gone with him to that place. They told me, however, that his son, a boy about twelve years old, had been left behind in Posen with the present chief rabbi, who was a son-in-law of his predecessor.

This information saddened me not a little. Still the last circumstance gave me some hope. I inquired after the dwelling of the new chief rabbi, and went to it; but, as I was almost naked, I shrank from entering, and waited until I saw some one going into the house, whom I begged to be so good as to call my friend's son out. The boy recognized me at once, and manifested his astonishment at seeing me here in such a pitiable plight. I replied, that this was not the time to relate all the misfortunes which had brought me into this state,

and that at present he should consider merely how he might somewhat relieve my distress.

This he promised to do. He went to the chief rabbi, and announced me as a great scholar and a pious man, who by extraordinary accidents had fallen into a very miserable condition. The chief rabbi, who was an excellent man, an acute Talmudist, and of very gentle character, was touched by my distress, and sent for me to come in. He conversed with me a while, discussing some of the most important subjects in the Talmud, and found me well versed in all branches of Jewish learning. Then he inquired about my intentions, and I told him that I wished to be introduced as a tutor into some family, but that meanwhile my only desire was to be able to celebrate the sacred season here, and for this short period at least to interrupt my travels.

The good-hearted rabbi bade me, so far as this was concerned, to lay aside all anxiety, spoke of my desire as a small matter, which it was nothing more than reasonable to want. He then gave me what money he had by him, invited me to dine with him every Sabbath, as long as I remained here, and bade his boy procure a respectable lodging for me. The boy came back soon, and conducted me to my lodging. I expected this to be only a small chamber in the house of some poor man. I was therefore not a little astonished, when I found myself in the house of one of the oldest Jews of the town, and that here had been prepared for me a neat little room, which was the study of the master, he and his son being both scholars.

As soon as I had looked round a little, I went to the housewife, and, thrusting some coppers into her hand, I asked her to get me some gruel for supper. She began to smile at my simplicity, and said, "No, no, sir, that is not our agreement. The chief rabbi has not given you such a recommendation, that you are obliged to have us making you gruel for money." She then went on to explain, that I was not only to lodge in her house, but also to eat and drink with them, as long as I stayed in the town. I was astonished at this unexpected good fortune; but my delight was still greater, when after supper I was shown to a clean bed. I could not believe my eyes, and asked several times, "Is this really for me?" I can say with truth, that never, before or since this incident, have I felt

such a degree of happiness, as when I lay down that night, and felt my limbs, which for half a year had been overwearied and almost broken, recovering their former strength in a soft bed.

I slept till late in the day. I had scarcely risen when the chief rabbi sent for me to come and see him. When I made my appearance he asked me how I was pleased with my lodging. I could not find words to express my feelings on the subject, and exclaimed in ecstasy, "I have slept in a bed!" At this the chief rabbi was uncommonly pleased. He then sent for the school precentor, and as soon as this man appeared he said to him, "Go to the shop of ——, and get cloth for a suit to this gentleman." Thereupon he turned to me and asked what sort of stuff I liked. Overpowered by the feeling of gratitude and esteem for this excellent man I could answer nothing. The tears streaming down my cheeks served for my only answer.

This period was undoubtedly the happiest and most honorable in my life. The young scholars of the town passed a resolution at their meeting to make up for me a salary, for which I was to deliver lectures to them on the celebrated and profound work of Maimonides, *Moreh Nebhochim*. This proposal, however, was never carried out, because the parents of these young people were anxious lest their children should be thereby led astray, and by independent thinking on religion be made to waver in their faith. They acknowledged indeed that, with all my fondness for religious speculation, I was still a pious man and an orthodox rabbi. But they could not rely upon their children having sufficient judgment, to be able to enter upon this course without passing from one extreme to the other, from superstition to unbelief; and therein perhaps they were right.

After I had spent about four weeks in this way, the man, with whom I lodged, came to me, and said, "Herr Solomon, allow me to make a proposal to you. If you are inclined merely to solitary study, you may remain here as long as you like. If, however, you do not wish to withdraw into such complete retirement, but are inclined to be of service to the world with your talents, there is a wealthy man here—one of the most prominent people of the town—who has an only son,

and wishes nothing so much as to have you for his tutor. This man is my brother-in-law. If you will not do it for his sake, please do it for mine, and to gratify the chief rabbi, as he has deeply at heart the education of my nephew, who is connected by marriage with his family.'' This offer I accepted with delight. I came therefore into this family under advantageous conditions as tutor, and remained with them two years in the greatest honor. Nothing was done in the house without my knowledge. I was always met with the greatest respect. I was held in fact to be almost something more than human.

Thus the two years flowed on imperceptibly and happily for me. But during the time some little incidents took place, which I believe should not be altogether omitted in this history.

In the first place the esteem entertained for me in this house went so far, that *malgré moi* they were going to make me a prophet. My pupil was betrothed to the daughter of a chief rabbi, who was a brother-in-law of the chief rabbi in Posen. The bride, a girl of about twelve years, was brought to Posen by her parents-in-law at the feast of Pentecost. On the occasion of this visit I observed that the girl was of a very phlegmatic temperament and somewhat consumptive. I mentioned this to the brother of my host, and added with a significant look, that I was very anxious for the girl, as I did not believe that her health would last long. After the feast was over the girl was sent home, and a fortnight afterwards a letter was received announcing her death. On this account, not only in the house where I lived, but in the whole town, I was taken for a prophet, who had been able to foretell the death of this girl. As I wished nothing less than to deceive, I endeavored to bring these superstitious people to a different train of thought. I told them that anybody, who had made observations in the world, would have been able to foretell the same thing. But it was of no use. Once for all I was a prophet, and had to remain one.

Another incident occurred in a Jewish house one Friday when they were preparing fish for the Sabbath. The fish was a carp, and it seemed to the cook who was cutting it up as if it uttered a sound. This threw everybody into a panic. The rabbi was asked what should be done with this dumb

fish that had ventured to speak. Under the superstitious idea that the carp was possessed with a spirit, the rabbi enjoined that it should be wrapped in a linen cloth, and buried with pomp.

Now, in the house where I lived, this awe-inspiring event became the subject of conversation. Having by this time emancipated myself pretty thoroughly from superstitions of this sort by diligent study of the *Moreh Nebhochim*, I laughed heartily over the story, and said, that, if instead of burying the carp, they had sent it to me, I should have tried how such an inspired carp would taste.

This *bon mot* became known. The learned men fell into a passion about it, denounced me as a heretic, and sought to persecute me in every way. But the respect, entertained for me in the house where I was tutor, made all their efforts fruitless. As I found myself in this way safe, and the spirit of fanaticism, instead of deterring me, rather spurred me on to further reflection, I began to push matters a little farther, frequently slept through the time of prayer, went seldom to the synagogue, and so on. At last the measure of my sins became so full, that nothing could secure me any longer from persecution.

At the entrance to the Common Hall in Posen there has been, no one knows for how long, a stag-horn fixed into the wall. The Jews are unanimously of the conviction, that any one who touches this horn is sure to die on the spot; and they relate a multitude of instances in proof. This would not go down with me at all, and I made fun of it. So one day when I was passing the stag-horn with some other Jews, I said to them, "You Posen fools, do you think that any one who touches this horn must die on the spot? See, I dare to touch it!" Horror-struck, they expected my death on the spot; but as nothing happened, their anxiety for me was converted into hatred. They looked on me as one who had profaned the sanctuary.

This fanaticism stirred up in me the desire to go to Berlin, and destroy by enlightenment the remnant of superstition which still clung to me. I therefore begged leave of my employer. He expressed the wish indeed, that I should remain longer in his house, and assured me of his protection

against all persecution. But as I had once for all taken my resolution, I was determined not to alter it. I therefore bade good-by to my employer and his whole family, took a seat on the Frankfurt post, and set out for Berlin.

XVII

As I came to Berlin this time by post, I did not require to remain outside the Rosenthaler Gate to be examined by the Jewish elders; I proceeded without any difficulty into the city, and was allowed to take up my quarters where I chose.

As I now had permission to remain in Berlin, I thought of nothing but how to carry my purpose into effect. Accidentally one day I went into a butter-shop, and found the dealer in the act of anatomizing a somewhat old book for use in his trade. I looked at it, and found, to my no small astonishment, that it was Wolff's *Metaphysics, or the Doctrine of God, of the World, and of Man's Soul.* I could not understand, how in a city so enlightened as Berlin such important works could be treated in this barbarous fashion. I turned therefore to the dealer, and asked him, if he would not sell the book. He was ready to part with it for two groschen. Without thinking long about it I gave the price at once, and went home delighted with my treasure.

At the very first reading I was in raptures with the book. Not only this sublime science in itself, but also the order and mathematical method of the celebrated author,—the precision of his explanations, the exactness of his reasoning, and the scientific arrangement of his exposition,—all this struck a new light in my mind.

With the Ontology, the Cosmology, and the Psychology all went well; but the Theology created many difficulties, inasmuch as I found its dogmas, not only not in harmony, but even in contradiction, with the preceding propositions. At the very beginning I could not assent to Wolff's argument *a posteriori* for the existence of God in accordance with the Principle of Sufficient Reason; and I raised the objection to it, that, inasmuch as, according to Wolff's own confession, the Principle of Sufficient Reason is abstracted from particular cases of experience, the only point which can be proved by it is, that every object of experience must have its sufficient rea-

son in some other object of experience, but not in an object beyond all experience. I also compared these new metaphysical doctrines with those of Maimonides, or rather of Aristotle, which were already known to me; and I could not bring them into harmony at all.

I resolved therefore to set forth these doubts in the Hebrew language, and to send what I wrote to Herr Mendelssohn, of whom I had already heard so much. When he received my communication, he was not a little astonished at it, and replied to me at once, that in fact my doubts were well founded, that I should not however allow myself to be discouraged on their account, but should continue to study with the zeal with which I had begun.

Encouraged by this, I wrote in Hebrew a dissertation in which I brought into doubt the foundations of Revealed as well as of Natural Theology. All the thirteen articles of faith, laid down by Maimonides, I attacked with philosophical arguments, with the exception of one, namely the article on reward and punishment, which I conceded merely in its philosophical interpretation, as referring to the natural consequences of voluntary actions. I sent this dissertation to Mendelssohn, who was not a little amazed, that a Polish Jew, who had scarcely got the length of seeing the Metaphysics of Wolff, was already able to penetrate into their depths so far, that he was in a position to shake their results by means of a correct Ontology. He invited me to visit him, and I accepted his invitation. But I was so shy, the manners and customs of the Berliners were so new to me, it was not without fear and embarrassment, that I ventured to enter a fashionable house. When therefore I opened Mendelssohn's door, and saw him and other gentlefolks who were there, as well as the beautiful rooms and elegant furniture, I shrank back, closed the door again, and had a mind not to go in. Mendelssohn however had observed me. He came out and spoke to me very kindly, led me into his room, placed himself beside me at the window, and paid me many compliments about my writing. He assured me, that, if I went on in this way, I should in a short time make great progress in Metaphysics; and he promised also to resolve my doubts. Not satisfied with this, the worthy man looked after my maintenance also, recommended

me to the most eminent, enlightened and wealthy Jews, who made provision for my board and other wants. Their tables I was at liberty to enjoy when I chose, and their libraries were open to my use.

Especially worthy of mention among these gentlemen was H——, a man of many attainments and excellent disposition, who was a particular friend and disciple of Mendelssohn. He took great pleasure in my conversation, often discussed with me the most important subjects in Natural Theology and Morals, on which I expressed my thoughts to him quite frankly and without disguise. I went over with him in a conversational way all the systems known to me that are generally denounced, and defended them with the greatest pertinacity. He met me with objections; I answered them, and brought in my turn objections against the opposite systems. At first this friend regarded me as a speaking animal, and entertained himself with me, as one is apt to do with a dog or a starling that has been taught to speak a few words. The odd mixture of the animal in my manners, my expressions, and my whole outward behavior, with the rational in my thoughts, excited his imagination more than the subject of our conversation roused his understanding. By degrees the fun was turned to earnest. He began to give his attention to the subjects themselves; and as, notwithstanding his other capabilities and attainments, he had no philosophical head, and the liveliness of his imagination generally interfered with the ripeness of his judgment, the results of our conversations may be readily imagined.

A few examples will be sufficient to give an idea of the manner in which I conducted a discussion at the time, of the ellipses in my diction arising from my deficiency in expressions, and of the way in which I illustrated everything by examples. I endeavored once to make Spinoza's system intelligible,—to show that all things are merely accidents of a single substance. My friend interrupted me and said, "But, good heavens! are not you and I different men, and do we not each possess an existence of our own?" "Close the shutters," I called in reply to his objection. This strange expression threw him into astonishment; he did not know what I meant. At last I explained myself. "See," said I, "the sun shines

through the windows. This square window gives you a square reflection, and the round window a round reflection. Are they on that account different things, and not rather one and the same sunshine?''

On another occasion I defended Helvetius' system of self-love. He brought against it the objection, that we surely love other persons as well as ourselves. ''For instance,'' said he, ''I love my wife;'' and to confirm this he gave her a kiss. ''That proves nothing against me,'' I replied. ''For, why do you kiss your wife? Because you find pleasure in doing it.''

Herr A—— M—— also, a good honest fellow, and at that time a wealthy man, allowed me free access to his house. Here I found Locke in the German translation, and I was pleased with him at the first hasty glance, for I recognized him as the best of the modern philosophers, as a man who had no interest but the truth. Accordingly I proposed to the tutor of Herr A—— M——, that he should take lessons from me on this admirable work. At first he smiled at my simplicity in proposing, that I, who had scarcely got the length of seeing Locke, should give lessons to him whose native tongue was German, and who had been brought up in the sciences. He acted, however, as if he found nothing offensive in the matter, accepted my proposal, and fixed an hour for the lessons. I presented myself at the time appointed, and began the lessons; but as I could not read a word of German correctly, I told my pupil to read aloud paragraph by paragraph in the text, and that then I should give him an exposition of each. My pupil, who pretended to be in earnest, consented to this also, to carry on the joke; but how great was his astonishment when he found, that no joke was to be played in the matter, that in fact my expositions and remarks, though delivered in my own peculiar language, evinced a genuine philosophical spirit.

As a man altogether without experience I carried my frankness at times a little too far, and brought upon myself many vexations in consequence. I was reading Spinoza. His profound thought and his love of truth pleased me uncommonly; and as his system had already been suggested to me by the Cabbalistic writings, I began to reflect upon it anew, and became so convinced of its truth, that all the efforts of Men-

delssohn to change my opinion were unavailing. I answered all the objections brought against it by the Wolffians, brought objections against their system myself, and showed, that, if the *nominal definitions* of the Wolffian Ontology are converted into *real definitions*, conclusions the very opposite of theirs are the result. Moreover, I could not explain the persistency of Mendelssohn and the Wolffians generally in adhering to their system, except as a political dodge and a piece of hypocrisy, by which they studiously endeavored to descend to the mode of thinking common in the popular mind; and this conviction I expressed openly and without reserve. My friends and well-wishers, who for the most part had never themselves speculated on philosophical subjects, but blindly adopted the results of the systems prevailing at the time as if they were established truths, did not understand me, and therefore also were unable to follow me in my opinions.

Mendelssohn, whose usual course was to tack, did not wish to oppose my love of inquiry, secretly even took pleasure in it, and said, that at present indeed I was not on the right road, but that the course of my thoughts must not be checked, because, as Descartes rightly remarked, doubt is the beginning of thorough philosophical speculation.

My moral theory was then genuine Stoicism. It aimed at the attainment of free will and the ascendancy of reason over the feelings and passions. It made the highest destination of man to be the maintenance of his *differentia specifica*, the knowledge of the truth; and all other impulses, common to us with the irrational animals, were to be put in operation merely as means to this chief end. The knowledge of the good was not distinguished by me from the knowledge of the true; for, following Maimonides, I held the knowledge of the truth to be the highest good of man. Mendelssohn, on the other hand, maintained that the idea of perfection, which lies at the basis of Ethics, is of much wider extent than the mere knowledge of the truth. All natural impulses, capacities and powers, as something good in themselves (not merely as means to something good), were to be brought into exercise as realities. The highest perfection was the idea of the maximum, or the greatest sum, of these realities.

The immortality of the soul, for me, following Maimonides,

consisted in the union with the Universal Spirit of that part of the faculty of knowledge which has been brought into exercise, in proportion to the degree of that exercise; and in accordance with this doctrine I held those only to be partakers of this immortality, who occupy themselves with the knowledge of eternal truths, and in the degree in which they do so. The soul, therefore, must, with the attainment of this high immortality, lose its individuality. That Mendelssohn, in accordance with modern philosophy, thought differently on this subject, every one will readily believe.

His sentiments in reference to revealed or positive religion I can give here, not as something made known to me by himself, but merely in so far as I have been able to infer them from his utterances on the subject in his writings with the assistance of my own reflections. For at that time, as an incipient freethinker, I explained all revealed religion as in itself false, and its use, so far as the writings of Mendelssohn had enabled me to understand it, as merely temporary. Moreover, being a man without experience, I thought it an easy matter to convince others in opposition to their firmly rooted habits and long-cherished prejudices, while I assumed the usefulness of such a reformation to be undoubted. Mendelssohn therefore was unable to hold any conversation with me on the subject, since he could not but fear lest, as has happened, and happens still, in the case of several others, I should pronounce his arguments in reply to be mere pieces of sophistry, and should attribute motives to him on that account. From his utterances, however, in the preface to his *Manasseh ben Israel* as well as in his *Jerusalem,* it is clear that, though he did not consider any revealed *doctrines* to be eternal truths, yet he accepted revealed laws of religion as such, and that he held the laws of the Jewish religion, as the fundamental laws of a theocratic constitution, to be immutable as far as circumstances allow.

So far as I am concerned, I am led to assent entirely to Mendelssohn's reasoning by my own reflections on the fundamental laws of the religion of my fathers. The fundamental laws of the Jewish religion are at the same time the fundamental laws of the Jewish state. They must therefore be obeyed by all who acknowledge themselves to be members

of this state, and who wish to enjoy the rights granted to them under condition of their obedience. But, on the other hand, any man who separates himself from this state, who desires to be considered no longer a member of it, and to renounce all his rights as such, whether he enters another state or betakes himself to solitude, is also in his conscience no longer bound to obey those laws. I assent moreover to Mendelssohn's remark, that a Jew cannot, by simply passing over to the Christian religion, free himself from the laws of his own religion, because Jesus of Nazareth observed these laws himself and commanded his followers to observe them. But how, if a Jew wishes to be no longer a member of this theocratic state, and goes over to the heathen religion, or to the philosophical, which is nothing more than pure natural religion? How, if, merely as a member of a political state, he submits to its laws, and demands from it his rights in return, without making any declaration whatever about his religion, since the state is reasonable enough not to require from him a declaration with which it has nothing to do? I do not believe Mendelssohn would maintain that even in this case a Jew is bound in conscience to observe the laws of his fathers' religion merely because it is the religion of his fathers. As far as is known, Mendelssohn lived in accordance with the laws of his religion. Presumably, therefore, he always regarded himself as still a member of the theocratic state of his fathers, and consequently acted up to his duty in this respect. But any man who abandons this state is acting just as little in violation of his duty.

On the other hand I consider it wrong in Jews, who from family attachments and interests profess the Jewish religion, to transgress its laws, where, according to their own opinion, these do not stand in the way of those motives. I cannot therefore understand the conduct of Mendelssohn in reference to a Jew of Hamburg who openly transgressed the laws of his religion, and who was on that account excommunicated by the chief rabbi. Mendelssohn wanted to cancel the excommunication on the ground that the church has no rights in civil matters. But how can he then maintain the perpetuity of the Jewish ecclesiastical state? For what is a state without rights, and wherein consists, according to Mendelssohn, the

rights of this ecclesiastical state? "How," says Mendelssohn, (in the preface to *Manasseh ben Israel*, p. 48), "can a state allow one of its useful and respected citizens to suffer misfortune through its laws?" Surely not, I reply; but the Hamburg Jew suffers no misfortune by virtue of the excommunication. He required only to say or do nothing which legally leads to this result, and he would then have avoided the sentence. For excommunication is merely tantamount to saying:—"So long as you put yourself in opposition to the laws of our communion, you are excluded from it; and you must therefore make up your mind whether this open disobedience or the privileges of our communion can most advance your blessedness." This surely cannot have escaped a mind like Mendelssohn's, and I leave it to others to decide how far a man may be inconsistent for the sake of human welfare.

XVIII

For *belles lettres* I discovered not the slightest inclination; I could not even conceive how any man was to form a science of what pleases or displeases—a matter which, according to my opinion at the time, could have merely a subjective ground. One day when I was taking a walk with Mendelssohn, our conversation fell upon the subject of the poets, whom he recommended me to read. "No," I replied, "I am going to read none of the poets. What is a poet but a liar?" Mendelssohn smiled at this and said, "You agree in this with Plato, who banished all poets from his Republic. But I hope that with time you will think differently on the subject." And so it happened soon.

Longinus' *On the Sublime* fell into my hand. The examples of the sublime which he adduces from Homer, and particularly the celebrated passage of Sappho, made a deep impression on my mind. I thought to myself, these are but foolish trifles, it is true, but the imagery and descriptions are really very beautiful. After that I read Homer himself, and was forced to laugh heartily at the foolish fellow. What a serious air, I said to myself, over such childless stories! By and by, however, I found a great deal of pleasure in the reading. Ossian, on the other hand, whom I got to read afterwards (of

course only in German translations) produced on me a peculiarly awe-inspiring effect. The pomp of his style, the impressive brevity of his descriptions, the purity of his sentiments, the simplicity of the objects described by him, and lastly, the similarity of his poetry to that of the Hebrews, charmed me uncommonly. Thus I found also a great deal of gratification in Gessner's Idylls.

My friend, the Pole of whom I spoke in the preceding chapter, who occupied himself mainly with *belles lettres,* was greatly delighted at my conversion. I used to dispute with him the utility of these studies; and once, when he was reading to me as a model of vigor in expression a passage of the Psalms, in which King David shows himself a master in cursing, I interrupted him with the words, "What sort of an art is this? Why, my mother-in-law—God bless her!—when she was squabbling with a neighbor woman, used to curse much more wildly than that!"

Now, however, he had his triumph over me. Mendelssohn also and my other friends were uncommonly pleased at this change. They wished me to devote myself regularly to the *humaniora,* as without these a man can scarcely make his own intellectual productions useful to the world. It was very difficult, however, to convince me of this. I was always in haste to enjoy the present, without thinking that, by due preparation, I could make this enjoyment greater and more lasting.

I now found gratification, not only in the study of the sciences, but generally in everything good and beautiful, with which I became acquainted; and I carried this out with an enthusiasm which passed all limits.

This, however, contributed not a little to alienate my friends. At last Mendelssohn asked me to come and see him, when he informed me of this alienation, and pointed out to me its causes. They complained, (1) that I had not made up my mind to any plan of life, and had thereby rendered fruitless all their exertions in my behalf; (2) that I was trying to spread dangerous opinions and systems; and (3) that, according to general rumor, I was leading a rather loose life, and was very much addicted to sensual pleasures.

The first of these complaints I endeavored to answer by

referring to the fact, which I had mentioned to my friends at the very first, that, in consequence of my peculiar training, I was indisposed for any kind of business, and adapted merely for a quiet speculative life, by which I could not only satisfy my natural inclination, but also, by teaching and similar means, provide for my support in a certain fashion. "As to the second point," I proceeded, "the opinions and systems referred to are either true or false. If the former, then I do not see how the knowledge of the truth can do any harm. If the latter, then let them be refuted. Moreover, I have explained these opinions and systems only to gentlemen who desire to be enlightened, and to rise above all prejudices. But the truth is, that it is not the mischievous nature of the opinions, it is the incapacity of those gentlemen to comprehend them, coupled with their reluctance to make such a humiliating confession, that sets them in arms against me. In reference to the third reproach, however, I must say with downright honesty, Herr Mendelssohn, we are all Epicureans. The moralists can prescribe to us merely rules of prudence; that is to say, they can prescribe the use of means for the attainment of given ends, but not the ends themselves. But," I added, "I see clearly that I must quit Berlin; whither, is a matter of indifference." With this I bade Mendelssohn farewell. He gave me a very favorable testimonial of my capabilities and talents, and wished me a prosperous journey.

To my other friends also I bade farewell, and in brief but emphatic terms thanked them for the favors they had shown. One of my friends was taken aback, when I bade him good-by, at my using the brief form, "I hope you will enjoy good health, my dear friend; and I thank you for all the favors you have bestowed upon me." It seemed to this excellent, but prosaically poetical man, as if the form were too curt and dry for all his friendliness towards me. So he replied with evident displeasure, "Is this all that you have learnt in Berlin?" I made no answer, however, but went away, booked by the Hamburg post, and departed from Berlin.

Accordingly I came into the city; but as I had no acquaintances here, and as I knew that at the Hague there was a gentleman belonging to a prominent Berlin family, and that he

had obtained from Berlin a tutor with whom I was acquainted, I set out for that place in a drag-boat.

Here I took lodgings at the house of a poor Jewish woman; but before I had time to rest from my journey, a man of tall, spare figure, in untidy clothing, and with a pipe in his mouth, came in, and, without observing me, commenced to speak with my landlady. At last she said to him, "Herr H——, here is a stranger from Berlin; pray, speak to him." The man thereupon turned to me, and asked me who I was. With my usual instinctive frankness and love of truth, I told him that I was born in Poland, that my love of the sciences had induced me to spend some years in Berlin, and that now I had come to Holland with the intention of entering some situation, if an opportunity offered itself. When he heard that I was a man of learning, he began to speak with me on various subjects in philosophy, and especially in mathematics, in which he had done a good deal. He found in me a man after his own heart, and we formed at once a bond of friendship with one another.

I now went to seek the tutor from Berlin, to whom I referred before. He introduced me to his employer as a man of high talent, who had made a great figure in Berlin, and had brought letters of introduction from that city. This gentleman, who made much of his tutor, as well as of everything that came from Berlin, invited me to dinner. As my external appearance did not appear to promise much, and I was besides thoroughly exhausted and depressed by my sea-voyage, I made a comical figure at table, and our host evidently did not know what to think of me. But as he put great confidence in the written recommendation of Mendelssohn and the oral recommendation of his tutor, he suppressed his astonishment, and invited me to his table as long as I chose to remain here. In the evening he invited his brothers-in-law to meet me. They were children of B——, celebrated for his wealth as well as his beneficence; and as they were men of learning themselves, they were expected to sound me. They conversed with me on various subjects in the Talmud, and even in the Cabbalah. As I showed myself thoroughly initiated into the mysteries of this sort of learning, even explained to them passages which they regarded as inexplicable, and

untied the most complicated knots of argument, their admiration was excited, and they believed they had come upon a great man.

It was not long, however, before their admiration turned to hatred. The occasion of this was the following. In connection with the Cabbalah they told me of a godly man, who had now for many years been a resident of London, and who was able to perform miracles by means of the Cabbalah. I expressed some doubts on the subject, but they assured me they had been present at performances of the kind during this man's residence at the Hague. To this I replied as a philosopher, that I did not indeed question the truth of their statement, but that perhaps they had not duly investigated the matter themselves, and gave out their pre-conceived opinions as facts. Moreover, I declared that I must regard with skepticism the effect of the Cabbalah in general, until it is shown that that effect is of such a kind as cannot be explained in accordance with the known laws of Nature. This declaration they held to be heresy.

At the end of the meal the wine-cup was passed to me, that I might, in accordance with the usual custom, pronounce the blessing over it. This however I declined with the explanation, that I did so not from any false shame of speaking before a number of men, because in Poland I had been a rabbi, and had very often held disputations and delivered sermons before large assemblies, and, in order to prove this, was now willing to deliver public lectures every day. It was merely, I explained further, the love of truth and the reluctance to do anything inconsistent, that made it impossible for me, without manifest aversion, to say prayers which I regarded as a result of an anthropomorphic system of theology.

At this their patience was completely exhausted; they reviled me as a damnable heretic, and declared it would be a deadly sin to tolerate me in a Jewish house. Our host, who was no philosopher indeed, but a reasonable and enlightened man, did not mind much what they said; my humble talents were of more value in his eyes than my piety. Accordingly they broke up immediately after dinner, and left the house in deep displeasure; but all their subsequent efforts to drive me from their brother-in-law's house were fruitless. I remained

in it about nine months, lived at perfect freedom, but very retired, without any occupation or any rational society whatever.

Here I cannot pass over in silence an event which was remarkable both in a psychological and in a moral point of view. In Holland I wanted nothing but an occupation suited to my powers, and naturally, therefore, I became hypochondriac. From feelings of satiety, not infrequently I fell upon the idea of making away with myself, and of thus putting an end to an existence which had become a burden to me. But no sooner did I come to action, than the love of life always assumed the upper hand again. Once, at the Feast of Haman, in accordance with the custom of the Jews, I had banqueted very heartily in the house where I took my meals. After the feast, about midnight I returned to my lodging; and as I had to pass along one of the canals that are laid out everywhere in Holland, it occurred to me that this was a very convenient opportunity for carrying out the design which I had often formed. I thought to myself, "My life is a burden. At present, indeed, I have no wants; but how will it be with me in the future, and by what means shall I preserve my life, since I am of no use for anything in the world? I have already resolved, on cool reflection at different times, to put an end to my life, and nothing but my cowardice has restrained me hitherto. Now, when I am pretty drunk, on the brink of a deep canal, the thing may be done in a moment without any difficulty." Already I had bent my body over the canal, in order to plunge in; but only the upper part of the body obeyed the command of the mind, trusting that the lower part would certainly refuse its services for such a purpose. So I stood for a good while with half the body bent over the water, and propped myself carefully with my legs firmly planted on the ground, so that a spectator might have fancied I was merely making my bow to the water. This hesitation destroyed my whole plan. I felt like a man who is going to take medicine, but, wanting the resolution required, raises the cup time after time to his mouth, and sets it down again. I began at last to laugh at myself, as I reflected that my sole motive for suicide was a real superfluity for the present and an imaginary want for

the future.[1] I therefore let the project drop for the time being, went home, and thus brought the serio-comic scene to an end.

Still another comical scene must be mentioned here. At the Hague there lived at that time a woman of about forty-five, who was said to have been very pretty in youth, and supported herself by giving lessons in French. One day she called upon me at my lodging, introduced herself, and expressed an irresistible desire for scientific conversation. She declared therefore that she would visit me frequently in my lodging, and requested the honor of a visit from me in return. This advance I met with great pleasure, returned her visits several times; and thus our intercourse became more and more intimate. We conversed usually on subjects in philosophy and *belles lettres.* As I was still at that time a married man, and, except for her enthusiasm in learning, Madam had little attraction for me, I thought of nothing beyond mere entertainment. The lady, however, who had been a widow now for a pretty long while, and had, according to her own story, conceived an affection for me, began to express this by looks and words in a romantic manner, which struck me as very comical. I could never believe, that a lady could fall in love with me in earnest. Her expressions of affection therefore I took for mere airs of affectation. She, on the other hand, showed herself more and more in earnest, became at times thoughtful in the midst of our conversation, and burst into tears.

It was during a conversation of this sort, that we fell upon the subject of love. I told her frankly, that I could not love a woman except for the sake of womanly excellences, such as beauty, grace, agreeableness, etc., and that any other excellences she might possess, such as talents or learning, could

[1] The love of life, that is, the instinct of self-preservation, seems rather to increase than to decrease with the diminution or uncertainty of the means of living, inasmuch as man is thereby spurred to greater *activity,* which develops a stronger *consciousness of life.* Only this want must not have reached its maximum; for the necessary result of that is *despair,* that is a conviction of the impossibility of preserving life, and consequently a desire to put an end to it. Thus every passion, and therefore also the love of life, is increased by the obstacles which come in the way of its gratification: only these obstacles must not make the gratification of the passions *impossible,* else despair is the result.

excite in me only esteem, but by no means love. The lady adduced against me arguments *a priori* as well as instances from experience, especially from French novels, and tried to correct my notions of love. I could not, however, be so easily convinced; and as the lady was carrying her airs to an absurd length, I rose and took my leave. She accompanied me to the very door, grasped me by the hand, and would not let me go. I asked her somewhat sharply, "What's the matter with you, Madam?" With trembling voice and tearful eyes she replied, "I love you."

When I heard this laconic declaration of love, I began to laugh immoderately, tore myself from her grasp, and rushed away. Some time afterwards she sent me the following *billet doux:*—

"Sir: I have been greatly mistaken in your character. I took you for a man of noble thoughts and exalted feelings; but I see now that you are a genuine Epicurean. You seek nothing but pleasure. A woman can please you only on account of her beauty. A Madame Dacier, for example, who has studied thoroughly all the Greek and Latin authors, translated them into her native language, and enriched them with learned annotations, could not please you. Why? Because she is not pretty. Sir, you, who are otherwise so enlightened, ought to be ashamed to cherish such pernicious principles; and if you will not repent, then tremble before the revenge of the injured love of

Yours, etc."

To this I returned the following reply:—

"Madam: That you have been mistaken, is shown by the result. You say that I am a genuine Epicurean. In this you do me a great honor. Much as I abhor the title of an *epicure,* on the other hand I feel proud of the title of *genuine Epicurean.* Certainly it is beauty alone that pleases me in a woman; but as this can be heightened by other qualities, these must also be pleasing as means towards the chief end. On the other hand, I can merely *esteem* such a woman on account of her talents; *love* her I cannot, as I have already explained in conversation. For the learning of Madame Dacier I have

all respect: she could at all events fall in love with the Greek heroes who were at the siege of Troy, and expect in return the love of their *manes* that were constantly hovering around her; but nothing more. For the rest, Madam, as far as your revenge is concerned, I do not fear it, since Time, which destroys all things, has shattered your weapons, that is, your teeth and nails.

Yours, etc."

Thus ended this strange love-affair.

I discovered that in Holland there was nothing for me to do, inasmuch as the main desire of the Dutch Jews is to make money, and they manifest no particular liking for the sciences. Besides, in consequence of not knowing the Dutch language, I was unable to give instructions in any science. I determined therefore to return to Berlin by Hamburg, but found an opportunity of traveling to Hanover by land. In Hanover I went to a wealthy Jew,—a man who does not deserve even to enjoy his riches,—showed him my letter of introduction from Mendelssohn, and represented to him the urgency of my present circumstances. He read Mendelssohn's letter carefully through, called for pen and ink, and, without speaking a word to me, wrote at the foot:—"I also hereby certify that what Herr Mendelssohn writes in praise of Herr Solomon is perfectly correct." And with this he dismissed me.

XIX

I MADE a prosperous journey back to Hamburg, but here I fell into circumstances of the deepest distress. I lodged in a miserable house, had nothing to eat, and did not know what to do. I had received too much education to return to Poland, to spend my life in misery without rational occupation or society, and to sink back into the darkness of superstition and ignorance, from which I had hardly delivered myself with so much labor. On the other hand, to succeed in Germany was a result on which I could not calculate, owing to my ignorance of the language, as well as of the manners and customs of the people, to which I had never yet been able to adapt myself properly. I had learnt no particular profession, I had not distinguished myself in

any special science, I was not even master of any language in which I could make myself perfectly intelligible. It occurred to me, therefore, that for me there was no alternative left, but to embrace the Christian religion, and get myself baptized in Hamburg. Accordingly I resolved to go to the first clergyman I should come upon, and inform him of my resolution, as well as of my motives for it, without any hypocrisy, in a truthful and honest fashion. But as I could not express myself well orally, I put my thoughts into writing in German with Hebrew characters, went to a schoolmaster, and got him to copy it in German characters. The purport of my letter was in brief as follows:—

"I am a native of Poland, belonging to the Jewish nation, destined by my education and studies to be a rabbi; but in the thickest darkness I had perceived some light. This induced me to search further after light and truth, and to free myself completely from the darkness of superstition and ignorance. In order to this end, which could not be attained in my native place, I came to Berlin, where by the support of some enlightened men of our nation I studied for some years—not indeed after any plan, but merely to satisfy my thirst for knowledge. But as our nation is unable to use, not only such planless studies, but even those conducted on the most perfect plan, it cannot be blamed for becoming tired of them, and pronouncing their encouragement to be useless. I have therefore resolved, in order to secure temporal as well as eternal happiness, which depends on the attainment of perfection, and in order to become useful to myself as well as others, to embrace the Christian religion. The Jewish religion, it is true, comes, in its articles of faith, nearer to reason than Christianity. But in practical use the latter has an advantage over the former; and since morality, which consists not in opinions but in actions, is the aim of all religion in general, clearly the latter comes nearer than the former to this aim. Moreover, I hold the mysteries of the Christian religion for that which they are, that is, allegorical representations of the truths that are most important for man. By this means I make my faith in them harmonize with reason, but I cannot believe them according to their common meaning. I beg therefore most respectfully an answer to the question, whether after

this confession I am worthy of the Christian religion or not. In the former case I am ready to carry my proposal into effect; but in the latter, I must give up all claim to a religion which enjoins me to lie, that is, to deliver a confession of faith which contradicts my reason."

The schoolmaster, to whom I dictated this, fell into astonishment at my audacity; never before had he listened to such a confession of faith. He shook his head with much concern, interrupted the writing several times, and became doubtful, whether the mere copying was not itself a sin. With great reluctance he copied it out, merely to get rid of the thing. I went then to a prominent clergyman, delivered my letter, and begged for a reply. He read it with great attention, fell likewise into astonishment, and on finishing entered into conversation with me.

"So," he said, "I see your intention is to embrace the Christian religion, merely in order to improve your temporal circumstances."

"Excuse me, Herr Pastor," I replied, "I think I have made it clear enough in my letter, that my object is the attainment of perfection. To this, it is true, the removal of all hindrances and the improvement of my external circumstances form an indispensable condition. But this condition is not the chief end."

"But," said the pastor, "do you not feel any inclination of the soul to the Christian religion without reference to any external motives?"

"I should be telling a lie, if I were to give you an affirmative answer."

"You are too much of a philosopher," replied the pastor, "to be able to become a Christian. Reason has taken the upper hand with you, and faith must accommodate itself to reason. You hold the mysteries of the Christian religion to be mere fables, and its commands to be mere laws of reason. For the present I cannot be satisfied with your confession of faith. You should therefore pray to God, that He may enlighten you with His grace, and endow you with the spirit of true Christianity; and then come to me again."

"If that is the case," I said, "then I must confess, Herr Pastor, that I am not qualified for Christianity. Whatever

light I may receive, I shall always make it luminous with the light of reason. I shall never believe that I have fallen upon new truths, if it is impossible to see their connection with the truths already known to me. I must therefore remain what I am,—a stiffnecked Jew. My religion enjoins me to *believe* nothing, but to *think* the truth and to *practice* goodness. If I find any hindrance in this from external circumstances, it is not my fault. I do all that lies in my power."

With this I bade the pastor good-by.

The hardships of my journey, coupled with poor food, brought on an ague. I lay on a straw-bed in a garret, and suffered the want of all conveniences and refreshments. My landlord, who took pity on me, called a Jewish physician, who prescribed an emetic which soon cured me of my fever. The doctor found that I was no common man, stayed to converse with me for some hours, and begged me, as soon as I recovered, to visit him.

Meanwhile my wife and eldest son arrived from Poland. A woman of rude education and manners, but of great good sense and the courage of an Amazon, she demanded that I should at once return home with her, not seeing the impossibility of what she required. I had now lived some years in Germany, had happily emancipated myself from the fetters of superstition and religious prejudice, had abandoned the rude manner of life in which I had been brought up, and extended my knowledge in many directions. I could not therefore return to my former barbarous and miserable condition, deprive myself of all the advantages I had gained, and expose myself to rabbinical rage at the slightest deviation from the ceremonial law, or the utterance of a liberal opinion. I represented to her, that this could not be done at once, that I should require first of all to make my situation known to my friends here as well as in Berlin, and solicit from them the assistance of two or three hundred thalers, so that I might be able to live in Poland independent of my religious associates. But she would listen to nothing of all this, and declared her resolution to obtain a divorce, if I would not go with her immediately. Here therefore it was for me to choose the less of two evils, and I consented to the divorce.

Meanwhile, however, I was obliged to provide for the lodg-

ing and board of these guests, and to introduce them to my friends in Breslau. Both of these duties I performed, and I pointed out, especially to my son, the difference between the manner of life one leads here and that in Poland, while I sought to convince him by several passages in the *Moreh Nebhochim,* that enlightenment of the understanding and refinement of manners are rather favorable than otherwise to religion. I went further: I sought to convince him, that he ought to remain with me; I assured him, that, with my direction and the support of my friends, he would find opportunities of developing the good abilities with which Nature had endowed him, and would obtain for them some suitable employment. These representations made some impression upon him: but my wife went with my son to consult some orthodox Jews, in whose advice she thought she could thoroughly confide; and they recommended her to press at once for a divorce, and on no account to let my son be induced to remain with me. This resolution, however, she was not to disclose till she had received from me a sufficient sum of money for household purposes. She might then separate from me forever, and start for home with her booty.

This pretty plan was faithfully followed. By and by I had succeeded in collecting some score of ducats from my friends. I gave them to my wife, and explained to her that, to complete the required sum, it would be necessary for us to go to Berlin. She then began to raise difficulties, and declared at once pointblank, that for us a divorce was best, as neither could I live happily with her in Poland, nor she with me in Germany. In my opinion she was perfectly right. But it still made me sorry to lose a wife, for whom I had once entertained affection, and I could not let the affair be conducted in any spirit of levity. I told her therefore that I should consent to a divorce only if it were enjoined by the courts.

This was done. I was summoned before the court. My wife stated the grounds on which she claimed a divorce. The president of the court then said, "Under these circumstances we can do nothing but advise a divorce." "Mr. President," I replied, "we came here, not to ask advice, but to receive a judicial sentence." Thereupon the chief rabbi rose from his

seat (that what he said might not have the force of a judicial decision), approached me with the codex in his hand, and pointed to the following passage:—"A vagabond, who abandons his wife for years, and does not write to her or send her money, shall, when he is found, be obliged to grant a divorce." "It is not my part," I replied, "to institute a comparison between this case and mine. That duty falls to you, as judge. Take your seat again, therefore, and pronounce your judicial sentence on the case."

The president became pale and red by turns, while the rest of the judges looked at one another. At last the presiding judge became furious, began to call me names, pronounced me a damnable heretic, and cursed me in the name of the Lord. I left him to storm, however, and went away. Thus ended this strange suit, and things remained as they were before.

My wife now saw that nothing was to be done by means of force, and therefore she took to entreaty. I also yielded at last, but only on the condition, that at the judicial divorce the judge, who had shown himself such a master of cursing, should not preside in the court. After the divorce my wife returned to Poland with my son. I remained some time still in Breslau; but as my circumstances became worse and worse, I resolved to return to Berlin.

XX

When I came to Berlin, Mendelssohn was no longer in life, and my former friends were determined to know nothing more of me. I did not know therefore what to do. In the greatest distress I received a visit from Herr Bendavid, who told me that he had heard of my unfortunate circumstances, and had collected a small sum of about thirty thalers, which he gave to me. Besides, he introduced me to a Herr Jojard, an enlightened and high-minded man, who received me in a very friendly manner, and made some provision for my support. A certain professor, indeed, tried to do me an ill turn with this worthy man by denouncing me as an atheist; but in spite of this I gradually got on so well, that I was able to hire a lodging in a garret from an old woman.

I had been an adherent of all philosophical systems in succession, Peripatetic, Spinozist, Leibnitzian, Kantian, and fin-

ally Sceptic; and I was always devoted to that system, which for the time I regarded as alone true. At last I observed that all these systems contain something true, and are in certain respects equally useful. But, as the difference of philosophical systems depends on the ideas which lie at their foundation in regard to the objects of nature, their properties and modifications, which cannot, like the ideas of mathematics, be defined in the same way by all men, and presented *a priori,* I determined to publish for my own use, as well as for the advantage of others, a philosophical dictionary, in which all philosophical ideas should be defined in a somewhat free method, that is, without attachment to any particular system, but either by an explanation common to all, or by several explanations from the point of view of each. Of this work also only the first part has as yet appeared.

In the popular German monthly already mentioned, the *Berlinische Monatsschrift,* various articles of mine were inserted, on Deceit, on the Power of Foreseeing, on Theodicy, and other subjects. On Empirical Psychology also I contributed various articles, and at last became associated with Herr Hofrath Moritz in the editorship of the periodical.

So much with regard to the events which have occurred in my life, and the communication of which, I thought, might be not without use. I have not yet reached the haven of rest; but—"Quo fata trahunt retrahuntque sequamur."

THE END

MADAME ROLAND

THE NOBLEST OF FRENCH REVOLUTIONISTS

1754-1793

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Marie Jeanne Phlipon, afterward the celebrated Madame Roland, was born in Paris, the daughter of a successful but improvident engraver. Marie, an unusually precocious and intellectual young woman, realized that her father was squandering her little fortune as well as his own, so she separated from him, rescued the remnant of her money, and lived alone in a sort of convent. She left this refuge at twenty-five to become the wife of M. Roland, a capable and honorable government official twenty years her senior. When the French Revolution broke out in 1789, Roland lent it his aid and rose to be Minister of the Interior. Madame Roland was her husband's chief advisor. Indeed, when the frenzied French extremists turned against Roland and he resigned his office, the Jacobin leader Danton declared to the Convention that whatever course was adopted toward Roland must be adopted toward Madame Roland also, "For every one knows he has not been alone in office."

This remarkably able woman established a sort of Revolutionary Salon, where enthusiastic patriots and idealists met to dream of the perfecting of the Republic. She thus stood out clearly as a leader of the moderate or Girondist republicans. When the madness of Danton and Robespierre led France into the horrors of the Reign of Terror, the Girondists were accused as traitors and were guillotined. M. Roland saved himself by flight; but Madame Roland was seized and after some months of imprisonment was guillotined. Never did any heroine meet death with calmer courage. Her last words upon the scaffold have become world-famed. "O Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!"

Madame Roland's celebrated autobiography was written during those last months in prison. She also wrote there another work, her "Historical Notes." This dealt with the public events and characters she had known; but the manuscript was taken from her and partly destroyed. The autobiography also shows signs of the haste and the

brutal surroundings amid which it was composed. Nevertheless it is a splendid record of a serenely strong and surely self-poised human soul. Few books are more uplifting in their assurance of the true nobility possible to our human nature.

THE PRIVATE MEMOIRS OF MADAME ROLAND

I

Prison of Sainte Pélagie,
Aug. 9, 1793.

The daughter of an artist, the wife of a man of letters (who, though he became a minister, remained an honest man), now a prisoner, destined perhaps to a violent and unexpected death, I have become familiar with both happiness and adversity, I have seen glory close at hand, and I have experienced injustice.

Born in obscure station, but of respectable parents, I spent my youth in the bosom of the fine arts, delighting in the charms of study, ignorant of all superiority but that of merit, of all greatness but that of virtue.

Arrived at years of maturity, I lost all hopes of that fortune, which might have placed me in a condition suitable to the education I had received. A marriage with a man of position appeared to compensate this loss; it laid, instead, the foundation for new misfortunes.

A gentle disposition, a strong mind, a solid understanding, an extremely affectionate heart, and an exterior which announced these qualities, rendered me dear to those by whom I was known. My station has created me enemies; personally I have had none; by those who have spoken the most ill of me I have never been seen.

So true is it that things are rarely what they appear to be, that the periods of my life in which I have tasted most pleasure, or experienced most vexation, were those which appeared to others the very reverse: the solution is that happiness depends on the affections more than on events.

I purpose to employ the leisure of my captivity in retracing what has happened to me from my tenderest infancy to the present moment. Thus to tread over again all the steps of our career is to live a second time; and what, in the gloom

of a prison, can we do better than to transport elsewhere our existence by pleasing fictions or the recollection of interesting occurrences?

If experience is less acquired by acting than by reflecting on what we see and on what we do, mine will be greatly augmented by my present undertaking.

Public affairs and my own private sentiments have afforded me sufficient matter for thinking and subjects enough for my pen, during the two months of my imprisonment, without obliging me to have recourse to distant times. Accordingly, the first five weeks were dedicated to Historical Notes, which formed perhaps no uninteresting collection. They have just been destroyed.[1] I have felt all the bitterness of this loss, which I shall never repair. But I should despise myself, could I suffer my mind to sink under anything that might occur. In all the troubles I have experienced, the most lively impression of pain has been almost immediately accompanied with the ambition of opposing my strength to the evil, and of surmounting it, either by doing good to others, or by exalting my own courage. Thus misfortune may pursue, but cannot overwhelm me; tyrants may persecute, but never, never shall they debase me. My Historical Notes are gone: I am about to write others of a private nature; and, prudently accommodating myself to my weakness at a moment when my feelings are acute, I shall talk of myself, the better to divert those feelings. I shall relate the good and the bad with equal freedom. He who dares not speak well of himself is almost always a coward who knows and dreads the ill that may be said of him; and he who hesitates to confess his faults has neither the courage to vindicate nor the virtue to repair them. Thus frank with respect to myself, I shall observe no restraint toward others: father, mother, friends, husband, I shall describe as they are, or in the colors in which they appeared to me.

While I remained in a quiet and retired station of life my natural sensibility so absorbed my other qualities, that it alone displayed itself, or governed them all. My first desire was to please and to do good. I was a little like that good M. de Gourville, of whom Madame de Sévigné said that the

[1] They were only partly destroyed. Some parts still survive.

love of his neighbor cut off half his words; and I merited what Sainte-Lette said of me, that with wit to point an epigram I never suffered one to escape me.

Since the energy of my character has been unfolded by circumstances, by political and other storms, my frankness stands foremost, without considering too nicely the little scratches it may inflict incidentally. Still I deal not in epigrams; they imply the taking a pleasure in the wounds dealt by satire, and I find no amusement in killing flies. But I love to do justice by the utterance of truths; and I refrain not from the most severe ones in presence of the parties concerned, without suffering myself to be alarmed, or moved, or angry, whatever may be their effect.

Gatien Phlipon, my father, was by profession an engraver; he also cultivated painting, and applied himself to that in enamel, less from taste than expectation of profit; but the fire, which it is necessary to employ in enameling, agreeing neither with his sight nor his constitution, he was obliged to relinquish this branch. He confined himself therefore to the first, the profits of which were moderate. But, though he was industrious, though the times were favorable to the exercise of his art, though he had much business, and employed a considerable number of workmen, a desire to make a more speedy fortune led him to speculate. He purchased diamonds and other jewels, or took them in pay from the tradesmen who employed him, to sell them again as opportunity offered. I mention this circumstance, because I have observed that ambition is generally fatal in all classes of men; for the few who are so lucky as to be raised by it, multitudes become its victims. The example of my father will afford me more than one application of this maxim. His art was sufficient to procure him a comfortable subsistence; he sought to become rich, and he ended with being ruined.

Strong and healthy, active and vain, he loved his wife, and was fond of dress. Without learning, he had that degree of taste and knowledge which the fine arts give superficially, in whatever branch they are practiced. Thus, notwithstanding his regard for wealth and whatever could procure it, he trafficked with tradesmen, but was intimate only with artists, painters, and sculptors. He led a regular life, while his am-

bition was not unbridled, or had experienced no disappointments. He could not be said to be a virtuous man, but he had a great deal of what is called honor. He would have had no objection to the receiving for a thing more than it was worth, but he would have killed himself rather than not pay the stipulated price of what he had purchased.

Marguerite Bimont, his wife, brought him, as a dower, little money, but a heavenly mind, and a most enchanting countenance. The eldest of six children, to whom she had been a second mother, she married at six-and-twenty, only to resign her place to her sisters. Her affectionate heart and captivating mind ought to have procured her a union with a man of sensibility and enlightened understanding; but her parents proposed to her an honest man whose abilities insured a subsistence, and her reason accepted him. Instead of happiness, which she could scarcely expect, she felt that she might at least secure domestic tranquillity. The ability to limit our desires is a proof of wisdom: positive enjoyments are rarer than most people imagine, but real virtue never lacks consolation.

I was the second of the seven children born to my parents, all of whom but myself died either at nurse or from mishaps while coming into the world; and my mother sometimes repeated with pleasure, that I was the only one with whom she had experienced no disaster; for her delivery had been as happy as her pregnancy: it seemed as if I had contributed to her health.

An aunt of my father selected for me, in the neighborhood of Arpajon, where she frequently went in summer, a healthy and good-tempered nurse, much esteemed in the place, particularly because the brutality of her husband rendered her unhappy, without, however, corrupting her disposition or altering her conduct. Madame Besnard, my great-aunt, had no child; her husband was my godfather; they both considered me as their own daughter. Their attentions to me have never slackened; they are still alive, and in the decline of their age are overwhelmed with sorrow, lamenting the fate of their darling niece, in whom they had placed their hopes and their pride. Venerable pair! be comforted: it is given to few to run their career in that silence and tranquillity which have at-

tended you. I am not unequal to the misfortunes that assail me, and I shall never cease to honor your virtues.

The vigilance of my nurse was encouraged or recompensed by my good relations; her zeal and success procured her the friendship of my family. As long as she lived, she never spent two years without coming to Paris to see me. When she heard that death had deprived me of my mother, she immediately hastened to me. I still recollect her appearance: I was confined to my bed with affliction: her presence recalling too forcibly to my mind my recent calamity, the first I had experienced, I fell into convulsions that terrified her. She withdrew; I saw her no more; she died soon after. I remember visiting her at the cottage in which she suckled me. I listened with emotion to the tales which her good-natured simplicity took pleasure in relating, as she pointed out my favorite spots, and related the tricks I had played her, with the humor of which she was still entertained.

At two years of age I was brought home to my father's. I have frequently been told of the surprise I manifested at seeing the lamps lighted in the streets in the evening, at which I explaimed, "What charming bottles!" . . . These little anecdotes, and others of equal importance, interesting only to nurses and fond uncles and aunts, should be here passed over in silence. It will not be expected of me to depict here a little brunette, two years old, whose dark hair played gracefully about a face animated with a glowing complexion, and which breathed the happiness of an age of which it had all the health. I know a better moment for drawing my portrait, and I am not so maladroit as to anticipate it.

The discretion and other excellent qualities of my mother soon gave her an ascendancy over my docile and affectionate disposition, which she never employed but for my good. So great was this ascendancy, that, in those little disputes unavoidable between authoritative reason and resisting infancy, she found it necessary to inflict no other punishment than gravely calling me "Mademoiselle" and fixing on me an eye of reproof. I still recollect the impression made upon me by her look, usually so affectionate; I hear, with a kind of trembling, this word Mademoiselle substituted, with solemn and touching dignity, for the gentle "*ma fille,*" or the grace-

ful appellation of Manon. Yes, Manon; for so I was called. I sympathize with the lovers of romance. Certainly the name is not noble; it ill suits a heroine in the "grand style;" nevertheless, it was mine; and it is history that I am writing. The most fastidious, however, would have been reconciled to the name, had they heard it pronounced by my mother, and seen her to whom it was addressed. What expression could want grace when she accompanied it with her enchanting tone? And when her affectionate voice so thrilled my heart, did it not teach me to resemble her?

Lively, without being boisterous, and naturally studious, I required only to be employed, and readily seized every idea that was offered me. This disposition was turned to so good account, that I do not remember having been taught to read. I have heard that at four years old the business, so to speak, was completed, and that, after that period, all that was necessary was to provide me with books. Whatever were put into my hands, or I could anywhere obtain, engrossed all my attention, and nothing could divert me from them but a nosegay. The sight of a flower pleases my imagination and flatters my senses to an inexpressible degree; it awakens to luxury the sense of existence. Under the tranquil shelter of my paternal roof, I was happy from my infancy with flowers and books; in the narrow confines of a prison, amidst the chains imposed by the most revolting tyranny, I have the same sentiment, and I forget the injustice of men, their follies, and my calamities, with books and flowers.

It was too excellent an opportunity of teaching me the Old and New Testaments, and the small and large Catechisms, to be neglected. I learned everything it was thought proper to give me, and I should have repeated the Koran had I been taught to read it. I remember a painter of the name of Guibal, since settled at Stuttgart, who a few years ago wrote an essay in praise of Poussin which obtained the prize from the Academy of Rouen, and who frequently came to my father's. He was a merry fellow, who told me many a nonsensical tale, which I have not forgotten, and by which I was vastly amused; nor was he less diverted in making me display in my turn my slender stock of knowledge. I think I see him now, with his whimsical face, sitting in an arm-chair,

taking me between his knees, on which I rested my elbows, and bidding me repeat the Athanasian Creed; then rewarding my compliance with the story of Tanger, whose nose was so long that he was obliged, when he walked, to twist it round his arm. More absurd contrasts than this might be made.

When seven years old, I was sent every Sunday to the parish church, to attend "Catechism," as it was called, in order to prepare me for confirmation. In the present state of things, they who read this passage may perhaps ask what that was; so I will inform them. In the corner of a church, chapel, or other place of devotion, a few rows of chairs or benches, extending to a certain length, were placed opposite each other. An open space was left in the middle, in which was a seat higher than the rest. This was the curule chair of the young priest, whose office it was to instruct the children that attended. They were made to repeat by heart the Epistle and Gospel for the day, the Collect, and such portion of the Catechism as was appointed for the week's task. When the children were numerous the catechizing priest had a little clerk who heard them repeat, while the master reserved the more important questions to himself. In some parishes pupils of both sexes attended together, ranged only on different forms; but in parishes in general they attended separately.

The mothers of the children, always greedy of the bread of the word, however coarsely prepared, were present at these instructions, which were graduated according to the ages of the pupils, or to their stage of preparedness for confirmation or for receiving the first communion. The zealous *curés* would from time to time visit their little flocks, who were taught to rise respectfully at their approach. A few questions were put to the more promising children to test their proficiency. The mothers of the ones questioned were elated at the distinction; and the good fathers withdrew amid their grateful curtsies. M. Garat, the rector of my parish, that of Saint Bartholomew, a worthy man with some reputation for learning, in spite of the fact that he was incapable of delivering two sentences together of common sense from the pulpit in which he was ambitious of shining—much as M. Garat, minister of state, is reputed a man of ability, though totally ignorant of his trade—M. Garat, I say, my rector, came one day to my "Cat-

echism,'' and in order to sound the depth of my theological erudition, and display his own sagacity, asked me how many orders of spirits there were in the celestial hierarchy. From the ironical tone and air of triumph with which he put the question, I knew that he expected to puzzle me; and I answered, with a smile, that though many were enumerated in the preface to the Missal, I had read, in other books, of nine, and I repeated to him *angels, archangels, thrones, dominions,* etc. Never was rector so satisfied with the learning of his neophyte. From that moment also my reputation was established among the devout matrons. I was accordingly a chosen vessel, as hereafter will be seen.

Some persons will perhaps say, that, with my mother's good sense, it is astonishing she should have sent me to these ''Catechisms;'' but there is a reason for everything. My mother had a younger brother, an ecclesiastic belonging to her parish, to whose care was committed the ''Catechism of Confirmation,'' to use the technical term. The presence of his niece was an admirable example, calculated to induce those who were not of what is called the lower order of the people to send their children also; a circumstance that could not fail to be pleasing to the rector. I had, besides, a memory which was sure to secure me the first rank; and everything combining to support this superiority, my parents gratified their vanity, while they appeared only to pursue the path of humility.

It happened that, in the distribution of prizes, which took place, with no small parade, at the end of the year, I obtained the first, without the least partiality being shown me; and the church-wardens and clergy thought my uncle extremely fortunate, who was on this account the more noticed, which was all that was necessary to prepossess every beholder in his favor. A handsome person, extreme benevolence, an easy temper, the gentlest of manners, and the utmost gayety, attended him to the last moment of his life. He died canon of Vincennes, just as the Revolution was about to abolish all ecclesiastical dignities. I conceive myself to have lost in him the last of my relations on the maternal side, and I cannot recollect a single circumstance respecting him without emotion. My eagerness to learn and my quickness of apprehen-

sion inspired him with the idea of teaching me Latin. I was delighted; it was a feast for me to find a new subject of study. I had at home masters for writing, geography, dancing, and music; my father instructed me in drawing; but in all this there was nothing too much.

Rising at five in the morning, when every one else in the house was asleep, I used to steal softly, in my bedgown and without shoes or stockings, to a corner of my mother's chamber, where was the table containing my lessons, which I copied or repeated with such assiduity that my improvement was astonishing. My masters became the more attached to me. They gave me long and interesting tasks, which called forth on my part additional attention. I had not a tutor who did not seem as much charmed to teach me as I was grateful for being taught; not one who, after attending me for a year or two, was not constrained to say that his instructions were unnecessary and that he ought no longer to be paid, at the same time requesting permission to visit my parents occasionally in order to converse with me.

I was extremely obstinate; that is to say, I did not readily consent to anything of which I saw not the reason; and when the exercise of authority alone appeared to me, or I fancied that I perceived the dictates of caprice, I could not submit. My mother, penetrating and discreet, rightly judged that I must either be governed by reason or drawn by the cords of affection; and, treating me accordingly, she experienced no opposition to her will. My father, hasty in his manner, issued his orders imperiously, and my compliance was reluctant and slow, if not wholly refused. If, despot-like, he attempted to punish me, his gentle little daughter was converted into a lion. On the two or three occasions when he whipped me, I bit the thigh across which he placed me, and protested against his injunctions.

One day, when I was a little indisposed, it was thought proper that I should take some medicine. A draught was brought me; I applied it to my lips; its smell made me reject it with loathing. My mother employed her influence to overcome my repugnance; I was desirous of obeying her; I exerted the sincerest efforts; but every time the nauseous potion approached my nose, my senses revolted, and I rejected it

in spite of myself. My mother's patience was exhausted. I wept both for her and for myself, and was still less capable of complying with her will. My father came; he flew into a rage and whipped me, ascribing my resistance to stubbornness. From that instant all desire of obedience vanished, and I declared openly my resolution not to take the medicine. Great uproar, renewed threats, a second whipping. I was only the more indignant, and shrieked terribly. I lifted my eyes to heaven, and prepared to throw away the draught they were again presenting to me. My gestures betrayed me. My father, in a rage, threatened to whip me a third time. I feel, while I write this, the sudden revulsion that came over me. My tears at once ceased, my sobbings were at an end. A sudden calm concentered my faculties into a single resolution. I raised myself, turned to the bedside, leaned my head against the wall, lifted up my chemise, and exposed myself to the rod in silence. Had my father killed me on the spot, he should not have drawn from me a single sigh.

My mother, painfully agitated during this scene, had need of all her prudence not to increase my father's rage. Having prevailed on him to quit the room, she put me to bed without saying a word. Two hours after, she returned, and conjured me, with tears in her eyes, to occasion her no further vexation, and to take the medicine. I looked steadfastly in her face, took the glass, and swallowed it at a draught. In a quarter of an hour, however, it was vomited up again, and I was seized with a violent paroxysm of fever, which it was necessary to cure by other means than nauseous drugs and whipping. I was at that time little more than six years old.

All the circumstances of this scene are as vivid in my mind, all the sensations I experienced as distinct to my imagination, as if they had recently occurred. I have since felt, on serious and trying occasions, the same inflexible firmness; and it would at this moment cost me no more to ascend undauntedly the scaffold, than it did then to resign myself to brutal treatment, which might have killed, but could not conquer me.

From that instant my father never laid his hand upon me nor even reprimanded me. He frequently caressed me, taught me to draw, made me the companion of his walks, and treated me with a kindness that rendered him more respectable in my

eyes, and obtained him my entire submission. The seventh anniversary of my birth was celebrated as the attainment of the age of reason, when it might be expected of me to follow its dictates. This was a politic sort of plea for observing towards me a more respectful treatment, that should give me confidence in myself without exciting my vanity.

The passion for learning possessed me to such a degree, that, having fallen upon a treatise on the art of heraldry, I set myself instantly to study it. It had colored plates, with which I was diverted, and I was desirous of knowing the names of all the little figures they contained. I soon astonished my father with a display of science, by making some remarks on a seal that was not engraved agreeably to the rules of the art. On this subject I became his oracle, and I never misled him. A short treatise on contracts fell into my hands. This also I endeavored to learn, for I read nothing which I was not ambitious of retaining; but it soon tired me, so that I did not reach the fourth chapter.

To the Bible I was much attached, and I continually resorted to it. In our old translations things are expressed with blunt plainness and without the smallest circumlocution, as in books of anatomy. I was struck with certain simple expressions, which have never escaped my memory. Hence I derived information not usually given to girls of my age; but it exhibited itself to me in no very seducing light. I had too much exercise for my thoughts to be inclined to give attention to things of this mere material nature, and which appeared to my imagination endowed with so few attractions. I could not, however, help laughing when my grandmamma spoke to me of little children dug out of the parsley-bed; and I told her that my *Ave Maria* informed me they came from another place, without troubling my head in what manner they got there.

Sometimes I read aloud at the request of my mother, an occupation of which I was by no means fond, as it suited not that thoughtfulness which formed my delight, and which led me to proceed with less rapidity. But I would have plucked out my tongue rather than have read in this manner the episodes of the island of Calypso, and a number of passages in Tasso. My respiration quickened, a sudden glow overspread my countenance, and my altered voice would have be-

trayed my agitation. With Telemachus I was Eucharis, and Herminia with Tancred. Completely transformed into these personages, I had no consciousness of any other existence. I forgot myself, I was regardless of everything around me. I was the very characters themselves, and I saw only the objects which existed for them. It was a trance that absorbed all my faculties. Meanwhile, I recollect having seen with considerable emotion a young painter of the name of Taboral, who came occasionally to our house. He was about twenty years of age, had a soft voice, languishing features, and blushed like a girl. When I heard him in the work-shop, I had always a crayon or something to fetch; but as the sight of him was as embarrassing as agreeable to me, I returned more speedily than I entered, and ran to conceal my beating heart and trembling limbs in my closet. I can readily believe at present, that, with such a disposition, assisted by leisure or a certain species of company, both the imagination and the conduct might undergo a very speedy revolution.

The works of which I have been speaking gave place to others, and their impressions were softened. Some of the writings of Voltaire in particular were instrumental in producing this effect. One day as I was amusing myself with "Candide," my mother having left the room for a moment, the lady with whom she was playing piquet asked me to show her the book I was reading. On my mother's return she expressed her astonishment at finding such a work in my hands; my mother, without replying, contented herself with bidding me carry it back to the place from which I had taken it. I regarded with an unfavorable eye this woman, fat and unwieldy, assuming a consequential grimace on what she had done; and I have never since honored Madame Charbonné with a smile. My good mother, however, made no alteration in her conduct, but permitted me to read whatever books I could procure, without seeming to attend to them, though she knew very well what they were. Meanwhile no immoral publication fell in my way; even to this day I know only the titles of two or three; and the taste I have acquired has never exposed me to the smallest temptation of procuring them. As I preferred books to everything else, my father sometimes made me presents of this kind; but, piquing himself as he did on

seconding my propensity to serious studies, his choice was whimsical enough. For instance, he gave me Fénelon on female education, and Locke on that of children, thus putting into the hands of the pupil what were designed for the tutor. I am persuaded, however, that this mistake was not unproductive of benefit, and that chance served me better than perhaps design might have done. I was arrived at considerable maturity; I loved to reflect; I thought with seriousness of forming my character, that is, I studied the movements of my mind; I sought to know myself; I felt that I had a destination which I must enable myself to fill. Religious notions began to ferment in my brain, and soon produced a violent explosion. . . .

The first thing that shocked me in my religion, which I professed with the seriousness of a solid and logical mind, was the sweeping damnation of all those who had not known and believed in it. When, instructed by history, I had well considered the extent of the earth, the succession of ages, the progress of empires, the virtues and errors of so many nations, I found the idea weak, absurd, and impious, of a Creator who should devote to eternal torment those countless beings, the frail work of His hands, cast on the earth in the midst of such perils, and in the night of an ignorance which has proved the root of a thousand misfortunes. "I am deceived in *this* article of my faith, it is evident; am I not equally wrong in some others? Let me examine." From the moment a Catholic has arrived at this point, the Church may regard him as lost. I perfectly conceive why the priesthood require a blind submission, and preach so ardently that religious credulity which adopts without examination, and adores without murmuring; this is the basis of their empire, which is destroyed as soon as we begin to investigate. Next to the doctrine of exclusive salvation, the absurd idea of infallibility was the most indigestible, and I rejected that like the other. "What then remains that is true?" said I. This became the object of a research continued during a number of years with an activity, and sometimes an anxiety, of mind, which it is difficult to describe.

Critical, moral, philosophical, and metaphysical writers became my favorite study. I was solicitous to find some one

who should assist me in my choice; and their analysis and comparison occupied almost all my attention. I had lost the monk of Saint Victor, my confessor; the good M. Lallement, to whose honesty and discretion I rejoice now to testify, was dead. Under the necessity of choosing a successor, my attention was directed to the Abbé Morel, who belonged to our parish, and whom I had seen at my uncle's; he was a little man, not deficient in understanding, and who professed the utmost austerity of principle, which trait was the motive that determined me in my choice. When my faith wavered, he was sure to be the first who was informed of it; for I never could tell anything but the truth; and he was eager to put into my hands the apologists and champions of Christianity. Behold me then closeted with the Abbé Gauchat, the Abbé Bergier, Abbadie, Holland, Clarke, and others. I studied them patiently, and I sometimes made notes, which I left in the book when I returned it to the Abbé Morel, who asked with astonishment if it was I who had written and conceived them. It is pleasant to remark that in these books I became acquainted with the authors they pretended to refute, and learned the titles of their works so as to be able to procure them; thus furnishing myself with the arms of deism from the very arsenal of Christianity. In this way did the treatise on "Toleration," the "Dictionnaire Philosophique," "Questions on the Encyclopedia," the "Bon Sens" of the Marquis d'Argens, the "Jewish Letters," the "Turkish Spy," "Les Mœurs," "L'Esprit," Diderot, d'Alembert, Raynal, and the "Système de la Nature," pass successively through my hands.

The progress of my mind was not the only one I experienced: nature had also its progress of different kinds, and was working in every way to my maturity.

To the newly acquired sensations of a frame robust and well organized, were insensibly joined all the modifications of a desire to please. I loved to appear well dressed, found delight in hearing it said of me, and occupied myself willingly in what was likely to procure me the gratification. This, perhaps, is as proper a place as any to introduce my portrait. At fourteen years, as now, my stature was about five feet, for I had completed my growth; my leg and foot were well formed; the hips full and bold; the chest large,

and the bust well rounded; my shoulders of an elegant *tournure;* my carriage firm and graceful, my step light and quick. Such was the first *coup d'œil.* As to my face, there was nothing in it specially striking of itself, save perhaps the fresh color, the tenderness and expression. To go into details, "Where," it may be asked, "is the beauty?" Not a feature is regular, but all please. The mouth is rather large—one sees a thousand that are prettier; but where is there a smile more sweet and engaging? The eye is scarcely large enough, and its iris is of a grayish hue; but, though somewhat prominently set, it is frank, lively, and tender, crowned by delicately penciled brown eyebrows (the color of my hair), and its expression varies with the changing emotions of the soul whose activity it reflects; grave and haughty, at times it imposes; but it charms oftener, and is always animated.

The nose gave me some uneasiness; I thought it too full at the end, but, regarded with the rest, and especially in profile, it did not detract from the general effect of the face. The ample forehead, at that age exposed and unhidden by the hair, with arched eyebrows, and veins in the form of the Greek γ, that dilated at the slightest emotion, dignified an *ensemble* remote enough from the insignificance of so many faces As for the chin, which was slightly retiring, it has the precise characteristics attributed by physiognomists to the voluptuary. Indeed, when I combine all the peculiarities of my character, I doubt if ever an individual was more formed for pleasure, or has tasted it so little. The complexion was clear rather than fair; its lively colors were frequently heightened by a sudden effervescence of the blood, occasioned by nerves the most sensitive; the skin soft and smooth; the arms finely rounded; the hand elegant without being small, because the fingers, long and slender, announce dexterity and preserve grace; teeth white and well ranged; and, lastly, the plenitude and plumpness of perfect health: such are the gifts with which nature had endowed me. I have lost many of them, particularly such as depend upon bloom and fullness of figure; but those which remain are sufficient to conceal, without any assistance of art, five or six years of my age, and the persons who see me must be informed of what it is, to believe me more

than two or three and thirty. It is only since my beauty has faded that I have known what was its extent; while in its bloom I was unconscious of its worth, and perhaps this ignorance augmented its value. I do not regret its loss, because I have never abused it; but if my duty could accord with my taste to leave less ineffective what remains of it, I certainly should not be mortified. My portrait has frequently been drawn, painted, and engraved, but none of these imitations gives an idea of my person; it is difficult to seize, because I have more soul than figure, more expression than features. This an inferior artist cannot express; it is probable even that he would not perceive it.

My face kindles in proportion to the interest with which I am inspired, in the same manner as my mind is developed in proportion to the mind with which I have to act. I find myself so dull with some people, that, perceiving the abundance of my resources with persons of talent, I have imagined, in my simplicity, that to them alone I was indebted for it. I generally please, because I dislike to offend; but it is not granted to all to find me handsome, or to discover what I am worth. I can imagine an old coxcomb, enamored of himself, and vain of displaying his slender stock of science, fifty years in acquiring, who might see me for ten years together without discovering that I could do more than cast up a bill, or cut out a shirt. Camille Desmoulins was right when he expressed his amazement that "at my age, and with so little beauty," I had still what he calls adorers. I have never spoken to him, but it is probable that with a personage of his stamp I should be cold and silent, if I were not absolutely repulsive. But he missed the truth in supposing me to hold a court. I hate gallants as much as I despise slaves, and I know perfectly how to baffle your complimenters. I have need, above all things, of esteem and benevolence; admire me afterwards if you will, but I cannot live without being respected and cherished: this seldom fails from those who see me often, and who possess, at the same time, a sound understanding and a heart.

That desire to please, which animates a youthful breast and excites so delicious an emotion at the flattering looks of which we perceive ourselves the object, was oddly combined with my

timid reserve and the austerity of my principles; and, displayed in my dress, it lent my person a charm that was strictly peculiar. Nothing could be more decent than my dress, nothing more modest than my deportment. I wished them to announce propriety and grace; and from the commendations that were bestowed upon me, I flattered myself that I succeeded. Meanwhile, that renunciation of the world, that contempt of its pomps and vanities, so strongly recommended by Christian morality, ill accorded with the suggestions of nature. Their contradictions at first tormented me, but my reasonings necessarily extended to rules of conduct, as to articles of faith. I applied myself with equal attention to the investigation of what I was to do, and the examination of what I ought to believe. The study of philosophy, considered as the science of manners and the basis of happiness, became indeed my only study, and I referred to it all my readings and observation.

During two months that I studied Descartes and Malebranche, I had considered my kitten, when she mewed, merely as a piece of mechanism performing its movements; but in thus habitually separating sensation from its manifestations, I became a mere anatomist, and found no longer anything attractive or interesting in the world. I thought it infinitely more delightful to furnish everything with a soul; and indeed, rather than dispense with it, I should have adopted the system of Spinoza. Helvetius did me considerable injury by annihilating all my most ravishing illusions; everywhere he posited a mean and revolting self-interest. Yet what sagacity! what luminous development! I persuaded myself that Helvetius delineated mankind as they had been disfigured and depraved by an erroneous and vicious form of society, and I judged it useful to be acquainted with his system, as a security against the knaveries of the world; but I was upon my guard against adopting his principles respecting man in the abstract, and applying them to the appreciation of my own actions.

I would not so undervalue and degrade myself: I felt myself capable of a generosity, of which he did not admit the possibility. With what delight did I oppose to his system the great exploits of history, and the virtues of the heroes it has celebrated! I never read the recital of a glorious deed but I

said to myself: "It is thus I would have acted." I became a passionate lover of republics, in which I found the most virtues to admire and the most men to esteem. I became convinced that this form of government was the only one capable of producing such virtues and such characters. I felt myself not unequal to the former; I repulsed with disdain the idea of uniting myself to a man inferior to the latter; and I demanded, with a sigh, why I was not born amidst these republics.

About this time we made an excursion to Versailles, my mother, my uncle, Mademoiselle d'Hannache, and myself. This journey had no other object than to show me the court and the place it inhabited, and to amuse me with its pageantry. We lodged in the palace. Madame le Grand, nurse to the Dauphin, well known to my uncle Bimont, through her son, of whom I shall have occasion to speak, being absent, lent us her apartments. They were in the attic story, in the same corridor with those of the Archbishop of Paris, and so close to them that it was necessary for that prelate to speak in a low tone of voice to avoid being overheard by us; the same precaution was requisite on our part. Two chambers indifferently furnished, over one of which it was contrived to lodge a valet, and the avenue to which was rendered insupportable by its obscurity and its odors, were the habitation which a duke and peer of France did not disdain to occupy, that he might have the honor of cringing every morning before their majesties; and this servile prelate, meanwhile, was no other than the austere Beaumont. For one entire week we were constant spectators of the life of the inmates of the château, sometimes separated, and sometimes united, their masses, promenades, card parties, and the whole round of presentations.

Our acquaintance with Madame le Grand facilitated our admission; while Mademoiselle d'Hannache, penetrated with confidence everywhere, ready to batter down with her name whoever should oppose any resistance, and fancying they must read in her grotesque countenance the ten generations of her genealogy. She recollected two or three *gardes du roi*, whose pedigrees she recounted with minuteness, proving herself precisely the relation of him whose name was the most ancient, and who seemed to possess most consideration at

court. The spruce figure of a little clergyman like Bimont, and the imbecile hauteur of the ugly d'Hannache, were not wholly out of place at Versailles; but the unrouged face of my respectable mother, and the sober decency of my apparel, announced that we were *bourgeois;* and if my youth or my eyes drew forth a word or two, they were modulated with a tone of condescension that gave me no less offense than the compliments of Madame de Boismorel. Philosophy, imagination, sentiment, and calculation were all equally exercised in me upon this occasion. I was not insensible to the effects of sumptuousness and magnificence, but I felt indignant that they should be employed to exalt certain individuals already too powerful from circumstances and totally insignificant in themselves. I preferred seeing the statues in the gardens to the personages of the court; and my mother inquiring if I was pleased with my visit, "Yes," replied I, "if only it be soon over; a few days longer and I shall so perfectly detest these people that I shall not know what to do with my hatred."

"What harm do they do you?"

"They give me the feeling of injustice, and oblige me every moment to contemplate absurdity."

In the midst of doubts, uncertainty, and investigation, relative to these grand objects, I concluded without hesitation, that the unity of the individual, if I may so express myself, the most entire harmony that is to say, between his opinions and actions, was necessary to his personal happiness. Accordingly we must examine well what is right, and when we have found it, practice it rigorously. There is a kind of justice that man has to observe towards himself, should he exist solitary on the earth: he should govern all his affections and habits, that he may be tyrannized and enslaved by none.

The sublime and interesting duties of a wife and a mother may some day be mine; the days of my youth therefore should be employed in rendering me equal to the discharge of them; I ought to study their importance; I ought to learn, by regulating my own inclinations, how to direct hereafter those of my children; by the habit of self-restraint, by the cultivation of my mind, I ought to secure to myself the means of effecting the happiness of the most delightful of societies, of providing a never-failing source of felicity for the man who shall merit

my esteem and love, and of communicating to all that surround us a charm and luster that shall be the entire work of my own hands.

Such were the thoughts that agitated my breast. Overcome with emotion, my heart shed its transports in tears; and ascending to that supreme Intelligence, that First Cause, that glorious Providence, that principle of thought and of sentiment, which it felt the necessity of believing and acknowledging, "O Thou," it exclaimed, "Who hast placed me on the earth, enable me to fill my destination in the manner most conformable to Thy divine will, and most beneficial to the welfare of my brethren of mankind!"

This concise prayer, simple as the heart that dictated it, has become my only one; never have the doubts of philosophy, or any species of dissipation, been able to dry up its source. From the tumult of the world and from the depth of a prison, it has ascended with the same energy. I have pronounced it with transport in the most splendid conjunctures of my life; I repeat it in fetters with resignation; anxious in the former to guard myself from everything that was unworthy of the dignity of my station, careful in the latter to preserve the necessary fortitude for supporting me in the trials to which I am exposed.

II

My mother's health began insensibly to decline. She had experienced an attack of the palsy, which she described to me under the milder name of rheumatism, for she desired to spare me the anxiety I should have felt had I known the truth. Naturally serious and taciturn, she became every day more so; she grew fond of solitude, and would frequently send me to walk with a favorite servant, unwilling herself to quit her apartment. She often talked of my settling in life, and lamented that I had not been able to choose a husband. One day in particular, she urged me, with a melancholy earnestness, to accept a young jeweler, who had made proposals in form. "He has in his favor," said she, "a great reputation for integrity, regular habits, and an easy fortune, which may become a brilliant one; and this last circumstance counts for much in a case where the man himself, it must be owned, is some-

what commonplace. He is acquainted with your singular way of thinking, professes high esteem for you, will be proud to follow your counsels, and has declared that he has no objection to his wife becoming the nurse of his children. You will have him in leading-strings."

"But I do not like a husband that must be led, he would be too unwieldy a child."

"You are certainly a singular girl! You will not rule, yet you will not have a master."

"Let us understand each other, dear mamma. I would not at all wish a man to dictate to me, for he would only provoke me to resist; nor should I wish to dictate to my husband. Either I am very much mistaken, or these lords of creation six feet high with beards on their chins seldom fail to feel that they are the stronger sex; now the good man who should think proper to keep me in mind of this superiority would certainly provoke me; and I should blush for him, on the contrary, if he allowed me to rule."

"I understand. You prefer a man who, while obeying you, should fancy he was having his own way."

"No, not that exactly. I dislike to submit, but I do not find myself made to rule; it would be a burden to me; my reason finds enough to do in governing myself. I would gain the affections of an individual worthy my esteem; one, with whose will a compliance would be no disgrace to me, and who would not find his happiness lessened by complying with mine, as far at least as reason and affection might authorize."

"Happiness, my child, is not so often composed of this perfection of relations and congeniality as you may imagine: if it depended upon nothing else, there would little of it be found in most of our matches."

"Then I know of none that I should envy."

"Perhaps so; still, among these marriages that you despise, there may be many preferable to remaining single. I may be called out of the world sooner than you imagine; you would remain with your father; he is still young, and you know not the chagrins to which my tenderness leads me to fear you may be exposed. Could I see you united, before I die, to a worthy man, how tranquil would it render the last moments of my existence!"

These words of my mother overwhelmed me with grief; she seemed to lift a veil from a somber and terrifying future which I had not so much as suspected. I had never thought of losing her; and the mere idea of this calamity, which she spoke of as approaching, filled me with terror; a cold shivering crept over the whole surface of my frame; I fixed on her my wild and eager eyes, from which a faint smile on her part drew forth a torrent of tears.

"Why, my dear child, are you so alarmed? Must we not in our calculations weigh possibilities? I am not ill, though at a period of life subject to swift and fatal changes; but it is in health that we must provide ourselves with consolations for the time of sickness, and the present occasion furnishes me with an opportunity of doing so. A worthy man offers you his hand; you are past twenty, and you must no longer expect the crowd of suitors by which, during the last five years, you have been surrounded. I may be snatched away from you. Do not reject a husband—who has not, it is true, the delicacy to which you affix such value (a quality very rare even among those who pretend to it), but who will love and cherish you and with whom you may be happy."

"Yes, my dear mamma," I exclaimed with a deep sigh, "as happy as you have been!"

My mother was agitated, and made no reply, and never from that moment importuned me upon the subject of this or any other marriage. The word had escaped me, like the expression of a strong and sudden feeling upon which we have not taken time to reflect, and the effect it produced convinced me too fully of its truth.

A stranger might have perceived at the first glance the disparity that existed between my father and mother; but who could feel like me all the excellence of the latter? Meanwhile, I had little calculated what she might suffer. Accustomed from my infancy to see the profoundest peace reign in the house, I was not a judge of what it cost her to maintain it. My father loved us both tenderly. A look of reproach I will not say, but an air of discontent had never clouded the face of my mother: whenever her opinion was not that of her husband, and she had been unable to convince him, she appeared to relinquish her own view without the smallest scruple.

It was only within a few years, that, provoked at times by the arguments of my father, I had occasionally mingled in their disputes. Gaining, however, some degree of influence, I soon began to use it with freedom. Whether it was from novelty or from weakness, my father yielded to me more readily than to his wife; and I always exerted myself as her champion. I became, so to speak, the watch-dog of my mother. I would not suffer her to be vexed in my presence, and was sure upon these occasions, either by assumed or real anger, always to make the assailant let go his hold.

What is still more extraordinary is, that, reserved as my mother herself upon this subject, not a word escaped me in private inconsistent with the respect due to the paternal character. I used in her defense the force and authority of reason, when address was insufficient; but afterwards, when alone with her, my lips were sealed as to what had passed. For her sake I could combat even against her husband; but this husband, when absent, became my father, of whom neither of us ever spoke but in commendation. Meanwhile I perceived that my father had gradually lost his habits of industry. The affairs of his parish having first diverted him, obliged him afterwards to be still more frequently from home. Insensibly dissipation mastered him; every spectacle or event drew him from his business; he acquired a taste for play; the connections formed at the tavern led him elsewhere, and the lottery lent the aid of its seductions. In haste to amass a fortune, he had engaged in outside speculations, which had not always been prosperous. This desire having at length little else to feed upon, degenerated into a rage for gaming. Ceasing to exercise his graver with the same attention as before, his skill diminished; observing a less regular life, his faculties were impaired, his eye and hand lost their steadiness and certainty.

His young workmen, neglected by the master, slackened in their industry and failed in their execution; it was soon necessary to decrease their number, his reputation and custom of course diminishing. These changes were gradual, and their effect was considerable before it was fully perceived. My mother, extremely thoughtful, began to hint to me her uneasiness, which I was cautious not to nourish by dwelling on what we could neither of us hope to remedy. I did what I could

to console her; she was grown averse to walking, and I submitted to the sacrifice of leaving her sometimes for the sake of going out with my father, whom I requested to take a walk with me, hoping thereby to divert him from less innocent pursuits. He no longer sought my company, but he was still pleased to attend me, and I led him back with a sort of triumph to that excellent mother, of whose tender heart I saw all the glad emotions at our reunion. But this little stratagem was not always successful; in order not to refuse his daughter, nor at the same time be disappointed of his own pleasures, when my father had brought me home, he would go out again, only, as he said, for an instant; but instead of returning to supper, he forgot the hour, and stayed till midnight. We had wept his absence in silence; and if I happened, at his return to tell him of our anxiety, he treated it lightly, parrying my gentle reproaches with raillery, or else retired with an air of discontent. Our domestic happiness was obscured and darkened by these clouds, but the harmony and quiet of the family remained unaltered, and the eyes of a stranger would scarcely have perceived the changes that were daily taking place.

My mother had suffered considerably for the space of more than a year from a malady of which her physicians had been totally unable to ascertain the cause. After employing to no purpose a variety of remedies, they at length advised exercise, for which she had no inclination, and the air of the country. This was upon the eve of Whitsuntide, 1773, and it was determined that we should pass our holidays at Meudon. On Sunday morning I did not wake in my customary spirits when these excursions into the country were in view. I had rested poorly, for my slumbers had been haunted by the gloomiest dreams: we were returning (as it had seemed to me) to Paris by water, having been driven back by a storm, when, as we were stepping to the shore, a corpse that had been carried from the boat, blocked our path. Chilled with terror at the sight, I was about fearfully to examine the ghastly object —when my mother, lightly laying her hand upon my bed and calling me with her soft voice, put an end to my dream. I was rejoiced to see her, as if she had escaped some imminent danger; I stretched out my arms, and embraced her with

emotion, expressing the pleasure she gave me by awaking me. I sprang out of bed, everything was soon ready, and we set off.

The weather was fine, the air calm, a little boat conveyed us to the place of our destination, and the delights of the country speedily restored my serenity. My mother was better for the journey; she resumed a portion of her activity; for the second time we discovered Ville-Bonne, and its honest inmates. I had promised to visit my Agathe on the Wednesday of the holidays; we accordingly returned on the evening of Tuesday. My mother had meant to accompany me; but, fatigued with the exertion of the preceding days, she changed her mind at the moment of my departure, and sent me with the servant. I would willingly have remained with her; but she insisted on my keeping my engagement, adding that it was no punishment to her to be alone, and that if I wished to take a turn in the public gardens, I might indulge myself.

Scarcely had I seen Agathe, when I was anxious to return. "Why are you in such haste," said she; "does any one expect you?"

"No; but something urges me to return to my mother."

"You have told me that you left her well?"

"That is true, nor does she expect me; I know not what it is that torments me, but I am anxious to be with her."

As I spoke, my heart swelled painfully, in spite of my efforts to control it.

Some persons will perhaps suppose that all these circumstances are the result of a mood that sheds its own hues upon the present and upon the immediate past. This, however, I am assured, is not the case. I am a faithful historian, and relate facts which, had it not been for the event, I should doubtless have forgotten.

Certainly it may be judged, from what has already been said of my opinions, and especially of the successive stages of my intellectual growth, that I was as little superstitious at that time as I am now credulous and orthodox. While I meditated in the sequel upon what could be the cause of what people call presentiments, I have imagined that it consists in that rapid survey which persons of a lively intelligence and strong feeling make of a crowd of evanescent circumstances, impossi-

ble to enumerate, which are rather felt than recognized, which give a tinge to the mind that the reason cannot justify, but that events ultimately appear to confirm.

The more lively the interest that we take in an object and the greater the concern we feel in everything that relates to it, the more we shall have of those physical perceptions, if I may be allowed the expression, which are afterwards styled presentiments, and which the ancients regarded as omens or suggestions from the gods.

My mother was an object to me of the tenderest regard: she approached her end without its being announced to common observers by any exterior circumstances, and I had myself seen nothing that positively menaced it; yet I was doubtless sensible to slight and indistinct changes that affected me as it were unconsciously. I could not have said I was unhappy, because I could have assigned no reason; but I felt a haunting anxiety, my heart sank when I looked at her, and in her absence I experienced an uneasiness, that would not suffer me to continue out of her sight. I quitted Agathe with so unusual an air, that she begged me to let her hear from me immediately. I returned precipitately, without attending to the remark of my nurse that the weather was extremely favorable for a walk in the gardens.

I approach the house, and find at our door a young girl of the neighborhood, who, on seeing me exclaims:—"Ah! mademoiselle, your mamma has taken ill; she has just sent to my mother, who is now with her in her chamber." Struck with affright, I utter some inarticulate sounds; I rush upstairs, and find my mother sunk in an armchair, her head reclined, her eyes wild, her mouth open, her arms pendent. At sight of me her countenance lights up; she attempts to speak; but her tongue utters painfully only a few broken words: she wished to say how impatiently she had expected me. She attempts to raise her arms; one only obeys the impulse of her will. She lifts her hand to my face, wipes away the tears that bedew it with her fingers, passes them gently over my cheeks as if to compose me. The wish to smile faintly appears in her languid features; she again endeavors to speak. Vain efforts! The palsy chains her tongue, weighs down her head, and deadens half her body. Spirits of balm, salt put into the mouth, and

friction, produce no effect. In an instant I had dispatched messengers after my father, and the physician; I had flown myself for two grains of emetic to the nearest apothecary's. The physician arrives, my mother is put to bed; the remedies are administered, and the disorder proceeds with a dreadful rapidity. The eyes are closed; the head, sunk on the chest, can no longer raise itself; a strong and quick respiration indicates the universal oppression. Yet she heard what was said, and, when asked if she felt much pain, pointed out the seat of her sufferings by pressing her left hand upon her forehead. I was inexpressibly active; I ordered everything, and had always done it myself before any other person could execute it; I prepared whatever was necessary, yet appeared never to quit the bed.

About ten o'clock in the evening I observe the physician call aside my father and some women who are in the apartment; I wish to know what he has proposed; they inform me that he recommends the administration of the extreme unction. I seem in a dream; the priest arrives; he prays, and does I know not what. I hold a light mechanically; I stand at the foot of the bed without answering or yielding to those who would remove me, my eyes fixed on my adored and dying mother, absorbed in a single feeling which suspends all my faculties. The light slips from my hand, and I fall senseless on the floor. They raise me: after some time I recover my consciousness, and find myself in the room adjoining the death-chamber, surrounded by the members of the family. I look toward the door, I attempt to advance; they restrain me; I make suppliant gestures to obtain permission to return. A mournful silence, and a dumb but constant opposition, is the only reply. I regain my strength; I pray, I conjure them, to let me pass; they are inexorable: I burst into a rage.

At that instant my father enters, pale and speechless; an air of fearful inquiry appears in every countenance, to which he replies by a silent movement of his eyes, that calls forth a general groan. I escape from the petrified hands of those about me; I rush impetuously forth. My mother!—she was no more! I lift up her arms; I cannot believe it. I open and close alternately the eyes that will never see me again, and that were wont to look upon me with so endearing a

tenderness; I call her; I throw myself with passion on her loved form; I join my lips to hers, and try to reanimate them with my breath; I would transfuse into them my soul, and expire on the instant. I know not what ensued; I only remember that I found myself in the morning at the house of a neighbor, with M. Besnard, who then conveyed me in a carriage to his own house. I arrive; my aunt embraces me in silence, sets me before a small table, and offers me something to drink, entreating me earnestly to take it. I endeavor to comply, and fall into a swoon. They put me in bed, where I pass a fortnight between life and death in frightful convulsions. The sensation, I remember, was that of constant suffocation; my respiration, as I have been told, was heard even from the street. I suffered a relapse, which rendered my situation still more critical, and from which I was saved only by the strength of my constitution and the attentions that were lavished on me. My good relatives had taken up with inconvenient lodgings for my better accommodation; they seemed to have gained new strength in order to recall me to life; they insisted upon nursing me themselves, and would allow no one to share their kind offices, except my cousin, Madame Trude, *née* Robineau, a young woman, who came every evening to spend the night with me, lying in the same bed, and ever vigilant to foresee and relieve the paroxysms with which I was continually seized.

Eight days were elapsed, and my grief had been unaccompanied with a tear: great sorrows have not so easy an issue. (I shed them, however, at this moment, bitter and burning; for I fear an evil still greater than what I then suffered. I have expended all my wishes for the safety of those I love; it is now more uncertain than ever! Calamities, like a dark and threatening cloud, envelop what is most dear to me; and I labor, with difficulty and pain, to distract my attention from the present by reflecting on the past.)

An epistle from Sophie came to reopen the source of my tears; the tender voice and soothing expressions of friendship recalled my faculties, and spoke consolation to my heart. They produced an effect that medicines and physicians had solicited in vain: a new revolution took place; I wept, and was saved. The suffocation diminished; the dangerous symp-

toms abated, and the convulsions became less frequent; yet every painful impression renewed them.

My father presented himself to me in the sad apparel that testified our loss, which, though common to us both, I found was unequally felt and deplored. He endeavored to console me by representing that Providence disposed everything for the best, even in our calamities; that my mother had fulfilled the task assigned her in this world, in the education of her child; and that, since heaven had decreed I was to lose one of my parents, it was better that the one should remain who could be most useful to my fortune.

Assuredly my loss was irreparable, even in this respect, as experience has but too well proved; but I did not then make this reflection; I felt only the barrenness of the intended consolation, so little adapted to my manner of thinking and feeling. I measured for the first time the gulf between my father and me; he seemed himself to tear away the reverential veil under which I had hitherto considered him. I found myself a complete orphan, since my mother was gone, and my father could never understand me: a new source of grief burst upon my already overburdened heart; I fell into the deepest despair. The tears, however, of my cousin, and the sorrow of my worthy relatives, still offered me subjects of tender emotion. Their influence prevailed, and I was snatched from the dangers that menaced my days. Alas, why did they not then terminate? It was my first affliction: by how many others has it been succeeded!

Here concludes the serene and shining epoch of those tranquil years, passed in the enjoyment of delightful sentiments and peaceful studies, and resembling the lovely mornings of spring, when the serenity of an unclouded sky, the purity of the air, the verdure of the foliage, and the perfume of the plants, enchant all who taste the mingled delights, unfold the heart and fancy, and impart present felicity by their promises of a riper and more blissful season.

III

September 10, 1793.

My mother was only fifty years of age when she was so cruelly taken from me. The very day she was snatched from

me I left her apparently well at three o'clock in the afternoon; I returned at half-past five to find her palsied; at midnight she was no more. Frail toys of a pitiless destiny! Why are sentiments so keen and projects so imposing linked with so fragile an existence?

Thus was taken from the world one of the gentlest, most lovable beings that ever graced it. Her qualities were not brilliant, but they were such as won and retained the love of all who knew her. Naturally pure and just, her virtues were the fruit of impulse, not effort. Prudent and self-poised, tender without passion, her tranquil spirit lived its days as flows some quiet stream that laves with equal complaisance the rock that holds it captive and the valley it embellishes. Her sudden loss plunged me in the profoundest grief.

"It is charming to possess sensibility, but it is unfortunate to have so much of it," said Abbé Legrand, who came to see me at the house of my relatives. When I began to recover, the latter were eager to invite or to receive people with whom I was acquainted, in order to familiarize me gradually with the life outside. I seemed scarcely to exist in the actual world. Absorbed in grief, I paid little attention to what was passing, speaking but seldom, and then mostly in reply to my own thoughts. At times the cherished image of her I could not forget, the poignant sense of her loss, would arise so vividly in my mind that I would shriek aloud, my outstretched arms would grow rigid, and I would fall fainting to the floor. Although incapable of application, I had however calmer intervals, during which I recollected the sorrow of my relations, their kindness, and the affectionate care of my cousin, and endeavored to diminish their anxiety. The Abbé Legrand possessed sagacity enough to discern that it was necessary to talk to me a great deal of my mother, in order to render me capable of thinking of anything else. He conversed with me about her, and led me insensibly to reflections and ideas which, without being foreign to the subject, banished the habitual recollection of her loss. As soon as he believed me sufficiently recovered to look at a book, he resolved to bring me the "Héloïse" of Jean-Jacques Rousseau; the perusal of which was in truth my first employment. I was then twenty-one years of age; I had read a

great deal; I was acquainted with a considerable number of writers, historians, learned men, and philosophers; but Rousseau made an impression on me similar to that which Plutarch had done when I was eight years old. It appeared that this was the proper food for my mind, and the interpreter of those ideas which I entertained before, but which he alone knew how to explain to me.

Plutarch had prepared me to become a republican; he roused that strength and stateliness of character which constitute one; he inspired me with a real enthusiasm in favor of public virtues and liberty. Rousseau pointed out to me the domestic happiness to which I could aspire, and the ineffable enjoyments which I was capable of tasting. Ah! if he is able to protect me against what are termed foibles, could he forearm me against a passion? Amidst the corrupt age in which I was doomed to live and the Revolution which I was then far from anticipating, I acquired beforehand all that could render me capable of great sacrifices and expose me to great misfortunes. Death will only be to me the term of both. I expect it, and I would not have dreamed of filling the short interval which separates us with the recital of my private history, if calumny had not dragged me on the stage, on purpose to make a more cruel attack upon those whom she would ruin. I love to publish truths that interest not myself alone; and I wish not to conceal one, that their coherence may serve toward their demonstration.

I did not return to my father's without experiencing all the sensations inspired by the sight of those places which one has been accustomed to associate with an object that is no more. They had taken the ill-judged precaution to remove my mother's portrait; as if the void thus produced was not calculated to recall more painfully than even her picture the loss I had experienced. I instantly demanded it: it was restored. The domestic cares devolving entirely on me, I occupied myself with them; but they were not numerous in a family of only three.

I have never been able to comprehend how such cares could absorb the attention of a woman who possesses method and activity, however considerable her household may be, for in that case there are a greater number of assistants to share

her labors; nothing more is necessary than a right distribution of employments, and a little vigilance. This I discovered in a variety of different situations, during all which nothing was ever done but in consequence of my orders; and when these cares were most pressing they scarcely ever consumed more than two hours a day. Leisure will always be found when one knows how to employ her time: it is the people who do nothing that want time for everything. Besides, it is not in the least surprising that the women who pay or receive useless visits, or who think themselves badly dressed if they have not consecrated many hours to their glass, find the days long from mere lassitude, and yet too short for the performance of their duties; but I have seen what are termed notable housewives who were insupportable to the world, and even to their husbands, on account of a fatiguing pre-occupation about their household affairs.

I do not know anything so disgusting as this ridiculous conduct, nor so well calculated to render a man attached to any other woman rather than his wife. She ought to appear to him to be a good housewife, but not to such a degree as to force him to search elsewhere for charms. I think that a wife should either keep, or cause to be kept, the linen and clothes in order, nurse her children, give instructions about or even superintend the cookery, without speaking of it; and all this with a command of temper, a proper disposal of those moments which allow her an opportunity of conversing about other matters, and in such a manner as to please, in short, by her good humor as well as by the charms of her sex. I have had occasion to remark that it is nearly the same in the government of states as of families. Those famous statesmen who are always quoting their labors either leave much in arrear or render themselves offensive to every one around them: those public men that vaunt so much of, and appear so deeply involved in business, only make a noise about their difficulties because of their incapacity to overcome them, or their ignorance in the art of government.

My studies became dearer to me than before; they formed my consolation. Left still more than ever by myself, and not seldom melancholy, I felt myself under the necessity of writing. I love to render an account of my own ideas to

myself, and the intervention of my pen makes them clearer. When I do not employ myself in this way, I revise still more than I meditate: by these means I curb my imagination, and accustom myself to reasoning. I had already begun to make some collections; to these I made some additions, and entitled the whole "The Works of Leisure Hours, and Various Reflections." I had no other object than by these means to fix my opinions and to possess a register of my sentiments, which I could some day compare with each other, in such a manner that their gradations or their changes might serve to myself at once as a lesson and a record. I have a pretty large packet of the "Works" of a young girl piled up in a dusty corner of my library, or in the garret. Never did I feel the slightest temptation to become one day an author; I perceived very early that a woman who acquires this title loses far more than she has gained. The men do not love, and her own sex criticize her. If her works are bad, they ridicule her; and they are right: if they are good, they ascribe them to some one else; if they are forced to acknowledge that she has discovered merit, they sift so maliciously her character, her morals, her conduct, and her talents, that they balance the reputation of her genius by the publicity which they give to her errors.

Besides, my happiness was my chief concern; and I perceived that the public never intermeddled with the happiness of any one without marring it. I do not find anything so agreeable as to have our real value appreciated by the people with whom we live; and nothing so empty as the admiration of a few persons whom we are never likely to meet.

Alas! what an injury did those do me who took it upon them to withdraw the veil under which I loved to remain concealed! During twelve years of my life I have shared my husband's tasks, as I shared his meals, quite naturally and as a matter of course. If one part of his works happened to be quoted in which were discovered unwonted graces of style, or if a flattering reception was given to an academic trifle he was pleased to transmit to the learned societies of which he was a member, I participated in his satisfaction, without remarking the more particularly on that account, whether it was I who had composed it; and he often ended

by persuading himself that he had been in a better vein than usual when he wrote such and such a passage. During his administration, if it was necessary to express great or striking truths, I employed the whole bent of my mind; and it was but natural that its efforts should be preferable to those of a secretary. I loved my country; I was an enthusiast in the cause of liberty; I was unacquainted with any interest or any passions that could enter into competition with these; and my language ought to be pure and pathetic, as it was that of the heart and of truth.

I was so much impressed with the importance of the subject that I never thought of myself. Once only I was amused with the singularity of the relative situations. This was when employed in writing to the Pope in behalf of the French artists imprisoned at Rome. A letter to the Pope, in the name of the Executive Council of France, sketched secretly by the hand of a woman, in the plain cabinet, which Marat was pleased to term a "boudoir," appeared to me such a bit of humor that I laughed heartily when I had finished it.

The pleasure of these contrasts consisted in the very secrecy; but this was necessarily less attainable in a public situation, where the eye of the clerk distinguishes the papers which he copies. There is nothing singular, however, in all this, unless it be its novelty. Why should not a woman act as secretary to her husband, without lessening his merit? It is well known that ministers cannot do everything themselves; and surely, if the wives of our rulers under the old (or even the new) régime had been capable of making draughts of letters, official dispatches, or proclamations, it would have been better to employ their time in this manner than in soliciting and intriguing for all sorts of people: the one excludes the other by the very nature of things.

If those who knew me had judged properly in respect to facts, they would have prevented me from suffering a sort of celebrity which I never envied; instead of now spending my time in refuting falsehood, I should be reading a chapter of Montaigne, painting a flower, or playing an *ariette*, and thus beguiling the solitude of my prison, without sitting down to write my confession.

But I now anticipate a period which I had not as yet

attained. I make my remarks equally without constraint, and without scruple; since it is myself that is to be described, it is necessary that I should be seen with all my irregularities. I do not lead my pen, it carries me along with it wherever it pleases, and I give it the rein.

My father honestly endeavored for some time after he became a widower, to remain more at home than hitherto; but he became weary of this, and when the love of his profession did not get the better of his failing, all my efforts could not cure it. I wished to converse with him, but we had few ideas in common; and he then probably hankered after a mode of life which he did not wish that I should be acquainted with. I often sat down to piquet with him. It was not perhaps very amusing for him to play with his own daughter; besides he was not ignorant that I detested cards, and however desirous I might be to persuade him that I took pleasure in them, and however honestly I tried for his sake to do so, he entertained no doubt that it was all mere complaisance on my part.

I could have wished to render his house agreeable to him, but the means were not in my power, as I had no other acquaintance than my old relations whom I visited, and who never put themselves out of their usual way. He might have formed a little society at home, but he had become accustomed to one of another sort elsewhere, and he well knew that it would not have been proper to introduce me there. Was my mother really in the wrong to live a life so secluded, and not to make her house gay enough to be attractive to her husband? This would be blaming her too readily; but it would also be unjust to consider my father as entirely to blame for his failings. There is such a connection between the evils which flow necessarily from a first cause, that it is proper always to ascend to the source for an explanation.

Everything went well while my father, with a good business and a young wife, found in his own home all the employment and pleasure which he could desire. But he was a year younger than my mother; she began early in life to experience infirmities; some circumstances slackened his ardor for labor; the desire of getting rich made him embark in a few hazardous enterprises: thenceforward all was lost. The

love of labor forms the virtue of man in a state of society; it is essentially that of the individual who does not possess a cultivated mind. The moment that this desire languishes, danger is at hand; if it be extinguished, he becomes a prey to the passions, which are always more fatal when there is less employment, because then there is also less restraint.

Become a widower at the very moment when he stood in need of new ties to confine him at home, my poor father kept a mistress, that he might not present his daughter with a step-mother; he had recourse to play, to indemnify himself for his loss of employment; and, without ceasing to be an honest man, sank gradually and insensibly to ruin.

My relations, worthy and unsuspicious people, confiding in my father's attachment to me, had not demanded an inventory of the estate after the death of his wife; my interests appeared to be safely confided to his guardianship; they would have imagined that they had wronged him had they done otherwise. I was placed in a situation that enabled me to surmise the contrary; but as I would have deemed it indecent to reveal what I knew on this subject, I remained silent and resigned. Behold me then alone in the house, my time divided between my housework and my studies, which I sometimes abandoned in order to answer people who were vexed at not finding my father at home. Two apprentices, one of whom lived in the house, were now sufficient for the work of the shop.

My servant was a little woman of fifty-five, thin, alert, sprightly, and gay, who loved me exceedingly because I made life pleasant for her. She always attended me when I went out without my father, but my walks never extended beyond the house of my grandparents and the church. I had not again grown devout; but what I no longer practiced out of regard to the scruples of my mother, I continued from a sense of duty to the good order of society and the edification of my neighbor. In obedience to this principle, I carried with me to church, if not the ardent piety of former years, at least enough of decorum and a spirit of meditation. I no longer accompanied the ordinary of the mass; I read some Christian work. For Saint Augustine I have always had much liking—and assuredly there are fathers of the church

whom one may peruse without being devout, for there is food enough in them both for the heart and the mind.

I wished to go through a course of reading of the preachers, the living as well as the dead. The eloquence of the pulpit is of a sort to enable the gift of oratory to unfold itself with splendor. I had already read Bossuet and Fléchier; I was glad to review them now with a maturer eye, and I became familiar with Bourdaloue and Massillon; nothing could be more diverting than to see their names entered in my little memorandum book with those of De Pauw, Raynal, and the author of "The System of Nature;" but what is still more so, is, that in consequence of reading sermons, I was seized with the desire of composing one. I was vexed that the preachers always recurred to mysteries; it seemed to me that they ought to have drawn up moral discourses, in which the devil and the incarnation were never mentioned. I accordingly seized my pen, to try my own hand at the business, and wrote a sermon on the *love of one's neighbor*. I amused my little uncle with it; he was become a canon of Vincennes, and said it was wrong in me not to have undertaken this sooner and at a time when he himself was obliged to compose discourses, as in that case he would have preached mine.

I had often heard the logic of Bourdaloue much vaunted; I dared in some measure to differ from his admirers, and actually drew up a criticism on one of his most esteemed discourses; but I never showed it to any one. I love to render an account to myself of my own opinions, but I do not choose to submit them to the eye of another. Massillon, less lofty than Bourdaloue, and far more affecting, won my esteem. I was not then acquainted with the Protestant orators, among whom Blair, more especially, has cultivated with equal simplicity and elegance that species of composition, whose existence I readily conceived, and which I could have wished to see adopted.

Among the preachers of that day, I have heard the Abbé l'Enfant, toward the close of his brilliant career; polish and reason appeared to me to characterize him. Father Élisée was already out of fashion, notwithstanding his close reasoning and chaste diction: his mind was too metaphysical and his delivery too simple to please the vulgar.

Paris was a singular place in those times; this rendezvous of all the impurities of the kingdom, was also the focus of taste and knowledge: preacher or comedian, professor or mountebank, in short whoever possessed abilities, was followed in his turn; but the first mind in the world would not have long fixed the public attention, for which novelty was always necessary, and this was effected by noise as well as by merit.

A certain person leaving the famous order of the Jesuits, becoming a missionary, and pretending to exhibit himself at court, was enabled by that means to attract notice and procure a number of followers. I also went to hear this Abbé de Beauregard; he was a little man, with a powerful voice, and declaimed with wonderful impudence and extraordinary violence. He retailed commonplaces with the air of inspiration, and he supported these by such terrible gesticulations, that he persuaded a great number of people they were very fine. I did not then know so well as now that men assembled together in great numbers possess ears rather than judgment; that to astonish is to lead them, and that whoever assumes the authority of commanding, disposes them to obey. I could not find utterance for my astonishment at the success of this personage, who was either a great fanatic, or a great rogue, and perhaps both.

I had not sufficiently analyzed the accounts of the orators of the ancient republics; else I should have been better able to judge respecting the means of affecting the passions of the people. But I shall never forget a vulgar man planted directly opposite the pulpit in which Beauregard was displaying his antics, with his eyes fixed on the orator, his mouth open, and involuntarily allowing to escape the expression of his stupid admiration in the three following words, which I well recollect: "How he sweats!" Behold then the means of imposing upon fools! How much reason had Phocion, surprised at finding himself applauded in an assembly of the people, to demand of his friends whether he had not uttered something foolish!

This same M. de Beauregard would have made a fierce *clubbist;* and how many of the members of the popular societies, in their enthusiasm over brazen-faced babblers, have

recalled to my memory the expression made use of by the man just spoken of, "How he sweats!"

My illness had created some talk; it would appear that people deemed it either very uncommon, or very charming, that a young girl should be in danger of losing her life through mere sorrow at the death of her mother. I received many marks of regard on this account, which were extremely agreeable to me. M. de Boismorel was one of the first who bestowed them; I had not seen him since his visits at my grandmother's. I perceived the impression which the change that had taken place in my person since that period, produced upon him. He returned during my absence, conversed a long time with my father, who doubtless spoke to him about my studies, and showed him the little apartment in which I passed my time. They looked at my books; my *works* were upon the table; these excited his curiosity, and my father took upon himself to gratify it, by showing them to him.

Great displeasure and complaints ensued on my part, when I found on my return that they had violated my asylum. My father pretended that he would not have complied with the wishes of any person less grave and less worthy of consideration than M. de Boismorel. His reasons did not make me relish his proceedings, as it was an offense against liberty and property; it was disposing, without my consent, of what I alone possessed the right of conferring; but, at all events, the harm was done. Next day I received a well-written letter from M. de Boismorel, couched in too flattering terms not to procure his pardon for having profited by the indiscretion of my father, and offering me access to his library. I did not read this proposal with indifference: from that moment a correspondence began between us; I tasted for the first time those agreable sensations which sensibility and self-love make us experience when we find ourselves esteemed by those whose judgment we value.

I must now bring upon the stage in his turn an old gentleman then just come from Pondicherry whom I saw often and with pleasure during nearly a year. My father had become acquainted, I know not how, but I suppose in the way of business, with a half-pay officer, later a civil servant out of employment, named Demontchery. He was a man of

thirty-six, with polished manners and a winning air—with those graces, in fine, which a knowledge of the world confers, and which form perhaps the flower of gallantry. Demontchery cultivated my father's friendship, without paying court to my mother, who might not have approved of his advances. He frankly declared his regard for me, and his ambition of soliciting my hand, if fortune ceased to prove adverse to him. She sent him straight to the East Indies, whence he wrote to us and did not conceal his wishes for that degree of success which would permit him to return with a competence. But being only a simple captain of Sepoys, and too honest a man to think of acquiring anything, he was not, I suppose, very far advanced in this pursuit, when he came home after seven years' absence, and, hastening to my father's, learned that I had been married a fortnight. I know not what has become of him, or what he might have inspired me with, had I thought of him. During his residence at Pondicherry, he formed an acquaintance with a M. de Sainte-Lette, one of the members of the council, and intrusted him with letters to my father, when the council deputed Sainte-Lette to Paris, in 1776, on some important business.

Sainte-Lette was more than sixty years of age; he was a man whose vivacity and unruly passions had led him astray in his youth, during which he dissipated his fortune at Paris. He had gone to America, and remained thirteen years in Louisiana as superintendent of the trade with the savages; thence he drifted to Asia, and found employment in the administration at Pondicherry, where he endeavored to acquire the means of living one day in France, along with the friend of his youth, M. de Sévelinges, of whom I shall hereafter make mention. A grave and solemn voice, distinguished by that tone which experience and misfortune confer, and sustained by the ready expression of a well-informed mind, struck me at the first interview with Sainte-Lette. Demontchery had spoken to him about me; it was this probably that inspired him with the desire of forming my acquaintance. My father received him graciously, and I with eagerness, because I soon became much interested in his favor; his society was exceedingly agreeable, he sought after mine, and during the

whole of his stay he never let four or five days pass without visiting me.

Those who have seen much are always worth hearing; and those who have felt much have always seen more than others, even if they have traveled less than Sainte-Lette. He possessed that kind of knowledge conferred far better by experience than books; less learned than philosophical, he reasoned from the human heart; he had retained from his youth a taste for the lighter kinds of poetry, and had composed some pretty verses. He presented me with several of these performances; I communicated some of my reveries to him, and he repeated to me several times with a prophetical tone, that is to say, with a full persuasion of the event: "Mademoiselle, you are in the right to be on your guard, for all this will end in your writing a book!"

"It shall then be under another person's name," I replied, "for I will eat my fingers sooner than become an author."

Sainte-Lette met a person[1] at my father's whom I had then been acquainted with during several months, and who was destined to have a powerful influence on my lot, although I scarcely foresaw it at that period. I have already observed that Sophie, though more accustomed than myself to mingle in society, was far from discovering any advantage in this circumstance. She had sometimes spoken to me of a man of merit who occasionally resided at Amiens, and who often visited at her mother's while there, which, however, was not very often, because he came to Paris in the winter, and often made still longer journeys in the spring. She had mentioned him to me, because, amidst the insignificant crowd with which she was surrounded, she distinguished with pleasure an individual whose instructive conversation appeared to her full of novelty, whose austere but unaffected manners inspired confidence, and who, without being generally beloved (for his severity, which sometimes approached harshness, was repellent to many), was nevertheless universally respected. To him, it seems, Sophie had already spoken of her friend; there was much talk, too, in her family of the constancy of a certain girlish attachment formed in the convent; finally, he had seen

[1] This was M. Roland.

a portrait of me, which Madame Cannet had introduced in evidence.

"Why, then," he used to say, "do you not make me acquainted with this dear friend? I go to Paris every year. Why not entrust me with a letter for her?"

He obtained the desired commission in September, 1775. I was then still in mourning for my mother, and in that melancholy and sensitive mood that succeeds violent grief. A messenger from my Sophie could not fail to be well received.

"This letter will be delivered," wrote my friend, by the philosopher of whom I have spoken, M. Roland de la Platière, an enlightened man of pure morals, who can be reproached with nothing save his preference of the ancients over the moderns (whom he despises) and his foible of being somewhat overfond of talking of himself." This sketch was just and well-drawn, as far as it went.

I saw in our visitor a man past forty, of a negligent air and that sort of stiffness that comes of studious habits; but his address was easy and direct, and though it lacked the polish of the world, it joined the air of good birth to the dignity of the philosopher. A face somewhat lean and sallow, a broad brow already but sparsely furnished with hair, regular features, made up an *ensemble* that was imposing rather than seductive. When Roland became animated in conversation, or when he was inspired by a specially agreeable idea, his subtle smile and animated face made him appear quite another person. His voice was manly, and he spoke in short sentences, like one whose respiration is labored; his discourse was full of matter, and exercised the judgment more than it flattered the ear; his speech was piquant at times, but harsh and inharmonious in delivery. In my opinion, the charms of the voice possess a rare but powerful effect over the senses; this does not alone appertain to the quality of the sound; it results still more from that delicacy of sentiment which varies the expression and modifies the accent.

They interrupt, to inform me that I am comprehended in Brissot's act of accusation, along with many other deputies recently arrested. The tyrants are at bay; they think to fill

up the pit open before them, by precipitating worthy people into it; but they themselves will fall in afterwards. I do not dread going to the scaffold in such good company; it is disgraceful to live in the midst of ruffians. I shall send away this section of my memoir, and prepare to proceed on another, if I am permitted.

Friday, October 4, *the birthday of my daughter, who on this day is twelve years of age.*

IV

Let us return to Sainte-Lette and Roland.

We had arrived at the close of the summer of 1776. I had several times seen M. Roland during the last eight or nine months. His visits were not frequent, but they were not short; just as the people who do not go out merely on purpose to show themselves at some place, but repair thither because being there affords them pleasure, stay as long as they can. His frank and instructive conversation never wearied me; and he loved to see himself listened to with attention, which I knew well how to bestow even upon people less informed than himself. This trait has perhaps gained me more friends than the faculty of delivering my own sentiments with some readiness.

I had first got acquainted with him on his return from Germany. He was then preparing for a journey into Italy; and, with that laudable love of method which characterized him, he had left his manuscripts with me, so that I could take charge of them in case of any mishap occurring to himself. I was sincerely affected with this mark of esteem, and I received it with thanks.

On the day of his departure he dined at my father's with Sainte-Lette. On taking leave, he requested permission to embrace me; and I know not how, but this mark of politeness always puts a young woman to the blush, even when her imagination is tranquil. "You are happy in departing," says Sainte-Lette to him, with his grave and solemn voice; "but make haste to return, in order to ask for another."

During Sainte-Lette's stay in France, his friend Sévelinges became a widower. He repaired to him at Soissons, where he resided, to share his grief, and brought him to Paris in order

to divert him. They visited me together. Sévelinges was fifty-two years of age; he was a gentleman of small fortune; he held a place in the finances in the province, and cultivated letters as a philosopher who knows their charms. Having thus formed an acquaintance with him, I maintained it after the departure of Sainte-Lette, who observed that he found some pleasure on leaving France, in reflecting that his friend would not lose the advantage of my society; he even asked permission to transmit to him, in order to be returned to me after a short delay, some manuscripts which I had communicated to him.

This interesting old man embarked perhaps for the fifth or sixth time of his life. An ulcer in his head, which he had already suffered from, opened while at sea; and he arrived ill at Pondicherry, where he died, six weeks after his return. We heard of his death through Demontchery. Sévelinges regretted him exceedingly. He wrote to me from time to time; and his letters, equally abounding in agreeable description and felicities of style, afforded me great pleasure. They were tinged with that mild philosophy and melancholy sensibility, for which I always possessed a great inclination. I also have remarked what Diderot has said on this subject, and with some justice, that great taste presupposes great sensibility, and a temperament inclined to melancholy.

My father, whose good disposition had altered by degrees, objected to this display of talents at such an expense of postage. I accordingly applied to my uncle, who authorized me to cause the letters of Sévelinges, whom he had seen at our house, to be addressed to him. My manuscripts were returned to me, accompanied by some critical observations of which I was exceedingly vain; for I had not supposed my "works" worth examination. They were in my own eyes reveries, sage enough, but trite, and related to things which it appeared to me that every one must be acquainted with. I did not think they possessed any other merit than the singularity of having been composed by a young girl. I long preserved the most perfect indifference on my own account. The events of the Revolution, the change of affairs, the variety of my situations, the frequent comparisons with a great crowd, and with people distinguished for their merit, were all necessary, in order to

make me perceive that the plane on which I stood was not encumbered with numbers. As to other points, and I hasten to make the observation, this has rather proved to me the mediocrity of my countrymen, than inspired a high idea of myself. It is not ability that is wanting; that may be found in the streets: it is correctness of judgment, and strength of character. Without these two qualities, however, I am unable to recognize what may be termed a man. In truth Diogenes was in the right to take a lantern! But a revolution may serve instead of one: I do not know a better measure, or a more exact touchstone.

The Academy of Besançon had proposed the following question as the subject of a prize essay: "In what manner can the education of women contribute to make men better?" My imagination took wings; I seized the pen and dashed off a discourse, which I sent in anonymously, and which, as may be believed, was not judged worthy of the reward. No one attained this honor. The subject was proposed anew, I have not learned with what result, during the following year. But I recollect that, in wishing to treat on this matter, I deemed it absurd to determine on a mode of education unconnected with general manners, which depend on the government; and thought that we ought not to pretend to reform one sex by the other, but to ameliorate the species by means of good laws. Accordingly I set forth what, in my judgment, women ought to be; but I added, that it was impossible to render them such unless in consequence of a new order of things.

This idea, certainly just and philosophical, did not meet the aim of the Academy. I reasoned on the problem instead of resolving it.

I transmitted a copy of this discourse to M. de Sévelinges, after having sent another to Besançon. Sévelinges, confined his remarks solely to the style. My head had become cool; I discovered my work to be exceedingly defective in the very foundation; and I amused myself with criticizing it as if it had been the production of another at which I wished to laugh heartily. This looks like tickling one's self to create a laugh, or slapping one's face by way of bringing color into the cheeks: but it is assuredly impossible to laugh by one's self with better inclination, or more innocence.

In return, Sévelinges communicated to me an academical discourse after his own fashion, on the faculty of speaking, which he had addressed to the Academy, and respecting which d'Alembert had transmitted him a flattering letter. There was, if I remember aright, much metaphysics and a little affectation in this work.

Six months, a year, and more elapsed in this correspondence, in the course of which, however, a variety of different ideas were started. Sévelinges appeared at length to be unhappy on account of my situation, and weary of living by himself. He made many reflections on the charms of a thinking society; I deemed this extremely valuable; we reasoned a long time on the subject. I do not well know what came into his head, but he at length took a journey to Paris, and presented himself *incognito* at my father's, as if upon business. What is most diverting is, that I did not recollect him, although it was I myself who received him. But the excessively mortified air with which he left me awakened in my memory the idea of his features. It occurred to me, after his departure, that the unknown person resembled him greatly; and I was presently assured by his letters that it was really himself. This singular occurrence made a disagreeable impression on me, which I do not know how to define. Our correspondence slackened; it at length ceased, as I shall hereafter mention.

I went sometimes to Vincennes: my uncle's parsonage was very pretty, the walks were charming, his society was agreeable; but although he possessed the advantage of a housekeeper in Mademoiselle d'Hannache, he began to find that he was obliged to pay for this by submitting to all the ill humor and folly of an old maid with great pretensions.

The castle of Vincennes was inhabited by a number of persons lodged there by the court. Here was an old censor-royal, Moreau de la Garve; there a female wit Madame de Puisieux; farther off a Countess de Laurencier; below, the widow of an officer; and so of the rest, without reckoning the king's lieutenant, Rougemont, whom Mirabeau has made known to the world, and whose pimpled face, and stupid insolence formed the most disgusting combination. A company of Invalides, the wives of whose officers composed part of the society, formed along with those I have reckoned, without counting the pris-

oners in the dungeons, six hundred inhabitants in the castle alone. My uncle was welcome everywhere, but he visited little and saw few people at home. But in returning from our evening walks we usually stopped at the pavilion on the bridge belonging to the park where the ladies assembled. There I found new pictures to paint, if I had time. But the hours have wings, and my task is long; so I must pass swiftly over many things. I may, however, mention the balls in the *allée des Voleurs;* the follies of Seguin, treasurer of the Duke of Orleans, whose *fête* they celebrated with illuminations, and who became a bankrupt soon after; the forest rambles, and the lovely view in the upper park beside the Marne, to gain which we passed through a breach in the wall; those wooden figures of hermits, so picturesquely placed in the church, where there was also a picture as good in execution as it was grotesque in subject, and which represented thousands of devils who were engaged in tormenting the damned in as many different ways; my readings with my uncle, especially of the tragedies of Voltaire; our concerts after supper, when, on the newly-cleared table, a pair of muff boxes did duty as a music-stand for the good Canon Bareux who (in spectacles) droned away dismally on his bass-viol, while I scraped the violin, and my uncle made a pretense of accompanying us on his flute. Ah! perhaps I may revisit some day those peaceful scenes, if they permit me to live. But I must now return in my narrative to Paris,—first, however, saying a word or two of a certain boaster who had gained some reputation.

V

I ENDED my last chapter at Vincennes. I was about to speak of Carricioli, whom I met at the Canon's, and whose "Letters," signed "Ganganelli," have met with some success, although they are largely repetitions of passages in the numerous little books from his hand. But had I thus followed the course of events, step by step, I should have undertaken a work which I shall not be allowed to live long enough to finish. Therefore I confine myself to a Sketch.

The manuscripts which M. Roland left in my care during the eighteen months he passed in Italy, made me better acquainted with him than frequent visits would have done. They com

prised travels, reflections, plans of works, personal anecdotes; and a strong mind, incorruptible honesty, knowledge, and taste were evinced throughout.

Born amidst opulence and of a family distinguished in the law for its probity, he had while still young seen its fortunes decline through disorder on one side and extravagance on the other. The youngest of five brothers, and like them destined for the church, he had left home at nineteen to avoid taking orders or engaging in commerce, to which he was no less averse. Arriving at Nantes he established himself there with a ship-owner, to gain an insight into affairs and with the view of going out to India. A sudden hemorrhage, which forbade a long sea-voyage, upset this plan. He repaired to Rouen, where a relative, M. Goudinot, inspector of manufactures, proposed to him to enter that branch of the administration. He determined to comply, and, soon distinguishing himself by his activity and industry, at length found himself advantageously settled.

Travel and study divided his time and occupied his life. Before setting out for Italy he had brought to my father's his favorite brother, a Benedictine, then prior of Clugny at Paris. He was a gifted man of gentle manners and amiable character. He came sometimes to see me, and to read to me the notes his brother had transmitted to him; for as he traveled, he committed his observations to paper. These are the notes which on his return he converted into letters and caused to be published, entrusting the printing of them to some friends at Dieppe, one of whom, enamored of Italian, evinced his respect to the passages in that language, by multiplying them. This work, which is replete with matter, only wants to be better digested to hold the first rank of all books of Italian travel.[1] To issue a new and correct edition was one of our projects since our union; but I also wished to see Italy; time and events have carried us elsewhere.

On the return of M. Roland, I found a friend; his gravity, his manners, his habits, wholly consecrated to literary labors, made me consider him as it were without sex, or as a philoso-

[1] This book was published under the title "Letters written from Switzerland, Italy, Sicily, and Malta in 1776, 1777, 1778." It is pronounced by Michelet the best one on its subject produced in France during the eighteenth century.

pher who existed by reason only. A sort of confidence established itself between us; and in consequence of the pleasure which he experienced in my company, he contracted by degrees the desire of visiting me oftener than before. It was near five years that I had been acquainted with him, when he made a declaration of tender sentiments. I was not insensible to this, because I esteemed his person more than that of any other man I had hitherto known, but I realized that neither he himself nor his family were altogether suitable to me or to mine in respect to external appearances. I told him frankly that his courtship did me honor, and that I would consent with pleasure, but that I did not think myself a good match for him; I then disclosed to him without reserve the state of our affairs: we were ruined. I had saved, through demanding an account from my father, at the risk of experiencing his hatred, five hundred *livres* of yearly income, which, with my wardrobe, formed the remnant of that apparent affluence in which I had been brought up.

My father was young; his errors might induce him to contract debts which his inability to discharge would render dishonorable: he might make an unfortunate marriage, and add to these evils children who would bear my name in misery, etc. I was too proud to expose myself to the ill-will of a family which would not deem itself honored by my alliance, or to the generosity of a husband, who on my part would find nothing but objects of vexation; I advised M. Roland in the same manner as a third person would have done, and endeavored to dissuade him from thinking of me. He persisted; I was affected, and I consented that he should take the necessary steps with my father; but, preferring to express himself in writing, he was resolved to broach the matter by letter on his return to the place of his residence; and during the remainder of his stay in Paris we saw each other daily. I considered him as the being to whom I was about to unite my destiny, and I became attached to him.

As soon as he had returned to Amiens, he wrote to my father to explain his wishes and designs. My father found the letter dry; he did not like M. Roland's stiffness, and liked ill to have for his son-in-law an austere man, whose looks appeared to him to be those of a censor; he replied with harsh-

ness, impertinence, and showed the whole to me, but not until he had sent off his answer. I instantly came to a resolution. I informed M. Roland, that the event had but too well justified my fears in respect to my father; that I would not occasion him further mortifications, and I begged him to abandon his project. I declared to my father what his conduct had obliged me to do. I added that after this, he need not be astonished if I entered into a new situation, and retired to a convent. But as I knew he had some pressing debts, I gave him the portion of plate that appertained to me, to satisfy them; I hired a little apartment at the Congregation, and retreated thither, firmly resolved to limit my wants by my means. I did so.

I could detail some interesting particulars respecting a situation in which I began to call forth the resources of a strong mind. I nicely calculated my expenditure, laying aside something for presents to the servants of the house. Potatoes, rice, and kidney-beans, stewed in a pot with a few grains of salt and a bit of butter, varied my food and my cookery, without consuming much of my time. I went out twice a week, once to visit my old relations, and again to repair to my father's, where I cast an eye over his linen and carried away what wanted mending. The rest of the time, inclosed within my roof of snow, as I called it (for I lodged near to heaven, and it was winter), without wishing to form any acquaintance with the boarders, I resigned myself to study. I fortified my heart against adversity by deserving happiness, and I avenged myself on that fortune which refuses to grant it. The loving Agathe spent half an hour with me every evening; the sweet tears of friendship accompanied the effusions of her heart. A turn in the garden during the hours when everybody had retired, formed my solitary walk; the resignation of a sage mind, the peace of a good conscience, the elevation of a character that defies misfortune, those laborious habits that make the hours fly so swiftly away, that delicate taste of a sound understanding which finds, in the sentiments of existence and the idea of its own value, indemnifications unknown to the vulgar: such were my treasures. I was not always free from melancholy; but this had its charms; and if I was not happy, I had within my own bosom all that was necessary to be so;

I could pride myself in knowing how to do without what I wanted in other respects.

M. Roland, astonished and afflicted, continued to write to me, as a man who did not cease to love me, but who had been hurt by the conduct of my father: he returned at the end of five or six months, and was inflamed at seeing me at the grating, where I however retained the countenance of prosperity. He wished me to leave this inclosure, offered his hand to me anew and pressed me through his brother the Benedictine to accept it. I reflected profoundly on what I ought to do. I did not dissemble that a man less than forty-five years of age would not have waited several months to try to prevail upon me to change my resolution, and I readily allowed that this idea had reduced my sentiments to a state in which there was no illusion.

I considered on the other hand, that this offer, so maturely reflected upon, ought to convince me that I was respected, and that if Roland had overcome his dread of the incidental vexations which my alliance might produce, I was so much the more assured of an esteem, which I should not have any difficulty in justifying. In fine, if marriage was, as I believed it to be, a stringent tie, an association in which the wife usually charges herself with the happiness of two individuals, would it not be better for me to exercise my faculties and my courage in this honorable task, than in the retirement in which I lived?

I might here, I think, detail some very sage reflections which determined my conduct; for as yet I have not mentioned all those which the circumstances could have suggested, but those only which experience permits me to perceive. . . . At length [2] I became the wife of a man of genuine worth, who loved me more in proportion as his knowledge of me increased. Married thus with my own full consent, I found nothing to make me repent of the step; I devoted myself to him with a zeal perhaps more ardent than discreet. Considering only the happiness of my partner, I saw that he lacked something for the completion of mine. I have not for a moment ceased to behold in my husband one of the most estimable of men, to whom I deem it an honor to belong; but I have often been

[2] February 4, 1779.

sensible of a certain lack of parity between us, and felt that the ascendancy of a somewhat masterful character, added to twenty years of seniority, rendered one of these superiorities too great. If we had lived in solitude, I should have had many disagreeable hours to pass; had we mingled much in the world I might have been loved by some whose affection, as I have learned, might touch me too deeply; I plunged, therefore, into work with my husband—an excess which also had its drawbacks, since he soon grew so accustomed to my aid as to be unable to dispense with it.

The first year of my marriage was spent at Paris, whither Roland was called by the Intendants of Commerce, who wished to enact new regulations of manufactures—measures which he strenuously opposed as colliding with those principles of freedom of trade which he advocated. He had printed the description of certain processes, which he had drawn up for the Academy; and he revised his Italian manuscripts. I acted as his secretary and corrected his proofs. I performed these tasks with a humility that I cannot help smiling at when I recollect it, and which was incongruous enough in a mind so cultivated as mine; but it proceeded from the heart. I revered my husband so frankly that I supposed he knew everything better than myself; and I so dreaded to see a cloud upon his brow, and he was so set in his opinions, that it was not until long afterwards that I gained assurance enough to contradict him.

I was then taking a course in Botany and Natural History; those were the recreations with which I relieved my labors as housewife and secretary; for, living in a *hôtel garni,* since our home was not at Paris, and perceiving that my husband's delicate health did not accommodate itself to all kinds of cookery, I took it upon myself to prepare such dishes as suited him best.

We spent four years at Amiens, where I acted as mother and nurse, without ceasing to share the labors of my husband, who had undertaken a considerable portion of the new Encyclopædia. We seldom quitted our study but for a ramble in the suburbs. I formed a herbarium of Picardy, and the study of aquatic botany gave place to *L'Art du Tourbier.* His frequent illnesses made me uneasy for Roland; my constant care

of him had its results, and this proved a new tie between us. He loved me the more for my devotion, I him for the services I had rendered.

He had met while in Italy a young man whose amiable disposition had greatly attracted him, and who had returned with him to France, where he had taken up the study of medicine, and become our intimate friend. This was Lanthenas, whom I should esteem more to-day, had not the Revolution, that touchstone of men, by pushing him forward upon the scene, disclosed his mediocrity and feebleness of character. He had private virtues, without exterior attractions; he was perfectly suited to my husband, and was deeply attached to us. I loved him, treated him as a brother, and conferred that name upon him. For a long time his devotion, his zeal for the right, did not flag. During my husband's second ministry, his courage, now first put to the proof, gave way before the increasing storms of the Revolution. He wished to steer safely between the two extremes of opinion; his views assumed a new tinge; too humane to sanction the ferocity of the Mountain, he lacked courage to cast his lot frankly with us. He affected to stand poised between the Right, whose "passions" he deprecated, and the Left, whose "excesses" he could not approve; he was less than nothing, for he earned the contempt of both sides.

During our stay at Amiens, Sophie was married to the Chevalier de Gomicourt, who lived *en fermier* on his estate six leagues from the town. Henriette, who had been partial to Roland, to whom her family had wished to see her united, heartily approved of his preference for me, thus showing the touching sincerity that adorned her character and that generosity of soul which makes her beloved. She married the aged de Vouglans, a widower of seventy-five, who had been advised by his confessor and his physician to take another wife. Both sisters are now widows. Sophie has again grown devout; and her frail health causes apprehension for a life so necessary to her two fine children. Our essential disparity of temperament and opinions and our long separation have relaxed without altogether dissolving our connection. The frank Henriette, impulsive and warm-hearted as of old, had visited me in my captivity, and would have taken my place, to procure my safety.

Roland desired shortly after our marriage that I should see these dear friends of mine as little as possible. I complied with his wishes, and I did not feel free to visit them until time had inspired him with confidence enough in me to remove all uneasiness on the score of rivalry in affection. It was ill-judged in him. Marriage is a grave and solemn matter; if you deprive a woman of sensibility of the pleasures of friendship with persons of her own sex, you diminish an aliment necessary to her, and expose her to temptation. How many consequences flow from this truth! . . .

We repaired to the *généralité* of Lyons in 1784, settling at Villefranche on the paternal estate of M. Roland, where his mother still lived, together with his eldest brother, the canon and counselor. I might paint here a number of pictures of the life and manners of a little town and their influence; of the domestic jars and vexations of a life spent with a woman venerable through her years and terrible through her temper, and with two brothers of whom the younger had the passion of liberty, the elder of dominion.

During two of the winter months we resided at Lyons, which I know well, and of which I could say much. A city superbly built and situated, then flourishing in commerce and manufactures, interesting through its antiquities and collections, famed for riches of which even the Emperor Joseph was envious, and which constituted it so splendid a capital; to-day a vast tomb of victims of a government a hundredfold more atrocious than the despotism upon whose ruins it is reared.

We went to the country in the autumn, and on the death of my mother-in-law, Madame de la Platière, spent the greater part of the year there. The Parish of Thézée, two leagues from Villefranche, where the Clos de la Platière is situated, is arid of soil, but rich in vines and woods; it is the last vine-growing region before the high mountains of Beaujolais. There my simple tastes turned to the details of rural economy and benefactions; there I applied, for the relief of my neighbors, my little stock of medical lore; I became the physician of the village, so much the more beloved because I gave succor instead of levying tribute, while the pleasure of being useful made my cares a labor of love.

How readily does the countryman open his heart to the

one who does him good! I do not pretend to say that these good folks felt themselves bound to me, but they loved me; and my absence was always bewailed with tears. I had many pleasant experiences, the good women sometimes coming three or four leagues for me, with a horse, to beg me to go to the rescue of some sufferer who had been given up by the doctor. In 1789 I saved from death my husband, who had been stricken with a painful malady from which the prescriptions of the physicians would scarcely have saved him but for my superintending care. I passed twelve days without sleep, and six months in the anxieties of a perilous convalescence, yet I was not even once indisposed; so much does courage confer strength and augment our activity.

The Revolution ensued and inflamed us; friends of humanity, adorers of liberty, we believed that it would regenerate the species, and destroy the disgraceful misery of that unfortunate class at whose lot we had so often been affected; we received the intelligence with rapture. Our opinions gave offense at Lyons to many individuals, who, being habituated to commercial calculations, could not conceive how any one should be induced out of mere philosophy, to provoke and applaud changes which could prove useful only to others. They became from this idea alone the enemies of M. Roland; thenceforward others prized him the more. He was made a member of the municipality on its first formation; he distinguished himself by his inflexible justice; he was feared, and calumny on one side took the field, while on the other, affection or impartiality defended him.

Deputed in the interests of that city to the Constituent Assembly, he repaired to Paris; we passed nearly a year there. I have mentioned elsewhere how we became acquainted with certain members of that Assembly, and connected ourselves naturally with those who, like us, did not love liberty on their own account, but hers, and who with us at present partake the lot common to almost all her founders and to humanity's true friends, such as Dion, Socrates, Phocion, and so many others of antiquity, and Barneveldt and Sidney in modern times.

My husband had induced me to visit England in 1784, and Switzerland in 1787. I have known many interesting personages in those two countries; we kept up a correspondence with

several. I have again heard within less than a year from Lavater, that celebrated pastor of Zurich, known by his writings, his brilliant imagination, his affectionate heart, and the purity of his morals. The honest and learned Gosse of Geneva will assuredly sigh at the persecution we experience. I know not what has become of the able Dezach, lately occupied in traveling through Germany, and formerly professor at Vienna, whom I often saw at London. Roland tilted with him at the house of Banks, the president of the Royal Society, where he assembles the learned of his own country, and the foreigners residing in London.

I experienced during my travels that pleasure and advantage which result from the company of a man already conversant with the places visited, and I remarked on and communicated to paper those circumstances that made the greatest impression. I also visited several parts of France: the Revolution has prevented our travels in the southern districts, and the journey to Italy, of which I entertained the desire and the hope.

Engrossed by public affairs, they occupied all our ideas; they have swallowed up all our projects; we resigned ourselves wholly to the passion of serving our country. It has been seen in the former part (First Administration) [3] how Roland was called to the ministry, as it were without his own knowledge; and his public conduct cannot fail to demonstrate to impartial posterity his disinterestedness, his attainments, and his virtues.

My father, whom we had no reason to praise, neither contracted a marriage, nor any other very burdensome engagement; we paid his few debts, settled upon him an annuity, and prevailed on him to retire from business. In spite of the troubles his errors had brought upon him (and they had occasioned among other things the dissipation of my grandmother's small property), and although he had every reason to applaud our proceedings, he was nevertheless too proud not to chafe at being thus indebted to us. This state of irritation, rooted in self-love, prevented him sometimes from being just even to those who aimed only at making him happy; he died, upwards of sixty years of age, during the severe winter of 1787-8, in

[3] This refers to her "Historical Notes."

consequence of a catarrh with which he had been long troubled.

My dear uncle expired at Vincennes, in 1789; soon after this, we also lost the dearly beloved brother of my husband. He made the tour of Switzerland in company with us, and had become prior and rector of Longpont; he was chosen an elector of his canton, where he preached liberty, as he practiced the evangelical virtues; the lawyer and physician of his parishioners, and too wise for a monk, he was persecuted by the ambitious of his own order, and suffered greatly from their persecutions, which accelerated his death. Thus everywhere, and in all times, the good succumb; they have therefore another world in which they are to revive, and in which they will not suffer the penalty attached to being born in this.

Blind calumniators! follow Roland close, sift his life, analyze mine; consult the societies in which we have lived, the towns where we have resided, the country, in which there is no dissimulation; examine . . . The more nearly you survey us the more you will be vexed; that is why you wish to annihilate us.

Roland has been reproached with soliciting letters of nobility: behold the truth. His family long possessed its privileges, in consequence of employments, which however did not render them hereditary, and the opulence which supported its attributes—coats of arms, chapel, livery, fief, etc. This opulence disappeared; it was succeeded by a genteel mediocrity, and Roland had the prospect of ending his days in a domain, the sole one remaining in his family, and which still appertains to his elder brother. He thought that he possessed a right, in consequence of his labors, to insure to his descendants an advantage which his ancestors had enjoyed, and which he would have disdained to purchase.

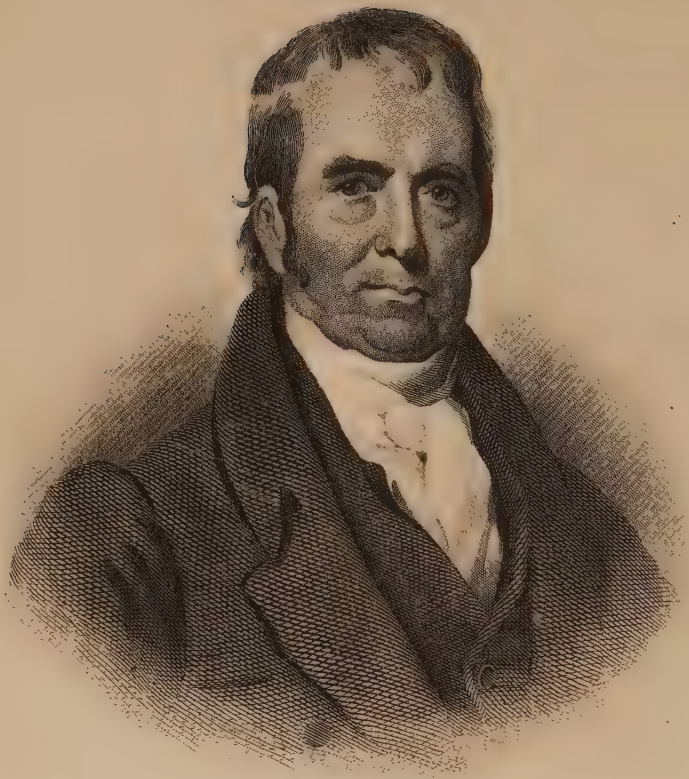
In consequence of this, he presented his claims in order to obtain letters recognizing his nobility, or ennobling him. This was at the commencement of 1784; I do not know the man who at that epoch, and in his situation, would have deemed it discreditable to have done as much. I repaired to Paris, and soon saw that the new superintendents of commerce, jealous of his seniority in a branch of the administration he was better acquainted with than themselves, and opposing him in opinions

relative to the liberty of commerce which he defended with vigor, while they gave him the requisite attestations respecting his labors, which indeed they could not refuse, did not display that zeal which insures success. I thought best therefore to abandon the project; and I pushed my suit no further. It was then that, learning the changes of which I have made mention in the curious article of Lazowski, I demanded and obtained the removal of Roland to Lyons, which brought him nearer to his family, and to a place where I knew that he would at length be desirous to retire. Patriots of the day, who stood in need of the Revolution to become something, adduce your labors, and dare to compare them.

Thirteen years spent in different places, in unremitting toil, with connections extremely varied, and of which the latter part appertains so particularly to the history of the day, would furnish materials for the fourth and most interesting section of my "Memoirs." The detached pieces which will be found in my "Portraits and Anecdotes," will serve in its stead. I know not any longer how to guide my pen amidst the horrors that devour my country: I cannot live above its ruins; I choose rather to bury myself under them. Nature, open thy bosom!

At thirty-nine years of age.

THE END



LAW

JOHN MARSHALL

THE GREATEST CHIEF-JUSTICE OF THE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT

1755-1835

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

John Marshall, America's foremost lawyer, recognized by all Americans as among the great intellectual founders of the United States government, is often called the "chief interpreter of the Constitution." Marshall was one of the younger patriots who fought through the American Revolution. He was a minor officer throughout the war, a member like Washington and Jefferson, of the Virginia aristocracy. After the war he took up practice as a lawyer, and rose rapidly in the service of his state and then of the United States, until in 1801 he was appointed by President Adams to be Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. He held this important position until his death over thirty years later; and it was his long series of legal decisions and interpretations of the Constitution that made the American government what it is to-day.

Outside of his great series of legal decisions, Marshall published only one noted literary work. He was selected to write the first official "Life of Washington," and his book is the source from which all later similar works have been mainly drawn. Of his own life, Marshall wrote only the brief sketch which is here given. It was prepared for a series of such sketches of great Americans, a series planned by one of the chief publishers of that day but never completed.

As the sketch is so very brief it has been supplemented by the few letters of the great Chief-Justice which speak intimately of his life. The most attractive and informative of these is the letter to his wife, in which the courtship of the aged couple is so tenderly recalled. Marshall was always deeply devoted to his wife and family.

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

RICHMOND, May 22, 1818.

I WAS born on the 24th of September, 1755, in the county of Fauquier in Virginia. My father, Thomas Marshall, was the

eldest son of John Marshall, who intermarried with a Miss Markham, and whose parents migrated from Wales, and settled in the county of Westmoreland in Virginia, where my father was born. My mother was named Mary Keith; she was the daughter of a clergyman of the name of Keith who migrated from Scotland, and intermarried with a Miss Randolph on James River.

I was educated at home, under the direction of my father, who was a planter, but was often called from home as a surveyor. From my infancy I was destined for the bar; but the contest between the mother country and her colonies drew me from my studies and my father from the superintendence of them; and in September, 1775, I entered into the service as a subaltern. I continued in the army until the year 1781, when, being without a command, I resigned my commission, in the interval between the invasions of Virginia by Arnold and Phillips. In the year 1782, I was elected into the legislature of Virginia; and in the fall session of the same year was chosen a member of the executive council of that state.

In January, 1783, I intermarried with Mary Willis Ambler, the second daughter of Mr. Jacquelin Ambler, then treasurer of Virginia, who was the third son of Mr. Richard Ambler, a gentleman who had migrated from England, and settled at Yorktown in Virginia. In April, 1784, I resigned my seat in the executive council, and came to the bar, at which I continued, declining any other public office than a seat in the legislature, until the year 1797, when I was associated with General Pinckney and Mr. Gerry in a mission to France. In 1798, I returned to the United States; and in the spring of 1799 was elected a member of Congress, a candidate for which, much against my inclination, I was induced to become by the request of General Washington. At the close of the first session, I was nominated, first to the Department of War, and afterward to that of State, which last office I accepted, and in which I was continued until the beginning of the year 1801, when Mr. Ellsworth having resigned, and Mr. Jay having declined his appointment, I was nominated to the office of Chief Justice, which I still hold.

I am the oldest of fifteen children, all of whom lived to

be married, and of whom nine are now living. My father died when about seventy-four years of age; and my mother, who survived him about seven years, died about the same age. I do not recollect all the societies to which I belong, though they are very numerous. I have written no book, except the Life of Washington, which was executed with so much precipitation as to require much correction.

A LETTER TO HIS WIFE, WRITTEN IN HIS SEVENTIETH YEAR DURING AN ILLNESS

WASHINGTON, February 23, 1825.

I shall be out in a few days. All the ladies of the secretaries have been to see me, some more than once, and brought me more jelly than I could eat, and many other things. I thank them, and stick to my barley broth. Still I have lots of time on my hands. How do you think I beguile it? I am almost tempted to leave you to guess, until I write again. You must know that I begin [a series of lover's reminiscences] with the ball at York, our splendid assembly at the palace in Williamsburg, my visit to Richmond for a fortnight, my return to the field, and the very welcome reception you gave me on my arrival at Dover, our little tiffs and makings-up, my feelings when Major A. was courting you, my trip to the Cottage [where they were married]—the thousand little incidents [of the courtship], deeply affecting in turn.

A LETTER WRITTEN IN 1832, ONE YEAR AFTER HIS WIFE'S DEATH

This day of joy and festivity to the whole Christian world is, to my sad heart, the anniversary of the severest affliction which humanity can sustain. While all around is gladness, my mind dwells on the silent tomb, and cherishes the remembrance of the beloved object which it contains.

On the twenty-fifth of December, 1831, it was the will of heaven to take to itself the companion who had sweetened the choicest part of my life, had rendered toil a pleasure, had partaken of all my feelings, and was enthroned in the inmost recess of my heart. Never can I cease to feel the loss, and to deplore it. Grief for her is too sacred ever to be profaned on this day, which shall be, during my existence, marked by the recollection of her virtues.

On the 3d of January, 1783, I was united by the holiest bonds to the woman I adored. From the moment of our union to that of our separation, I never ceased to thank heaven for this, its best gift. Not a moment passed in which I did not consider her as the blessing from which the chief happiness of my life was derived. This never-dying sentiment, originating in love, was cherished by a long and close observation of as amiable and estimable qualities as ever adorned the female bosom. To a person which, in youth, was very attractive, to manners uncommonly pleasing, she added a fine understanding, and the sweetest temper that can accompany a just and modest sense of what was due to herself. She was educated with a profound reverence for religion, which she preserved to her last moments. This sentiment, among her earliest and deepest impressions, gave a coloring to her whole life. Hers was the religion taught by the Savior of man. She was a firm believer in the faith inculcated by the Church [Episcopal] in which she was bred.

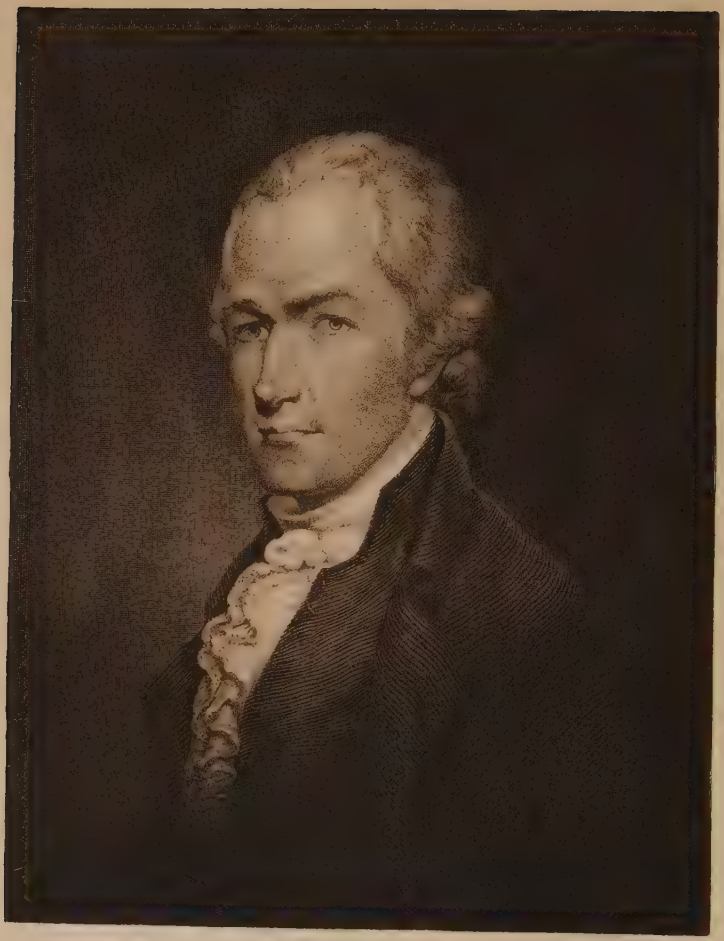
I have lost her, and with her have lost the solace of my life! Yet she remains still the companion of my retired hours, still occupies my inmost bosom. When alone, and unemployed, my mind still recurs to her.

A LETTER TO HIS GRANDSON, JOHN MARSHALL, JR., ADVISING HIM AS TO HOW TO WRITE

RICHMOND, December 7, 1834.

. . . . The man who by seeking embellishment hazards confusion is greatly mistaken in what constitutes good writing. The meaning ought never to be mistaken. Indeed, the readers should never be obliged to search for it. The writer should always express himself so clearly as to make it impossible to misunderstand him. He should be comprehended without an effort. The first step toward writing and speaking clearly is to think clearly. Let the subject be perfectly understood, and a man will soon find words to convey his meaning to others.

THE END



ALEXANDER HAMILTON

WASHINGTON'S CHIEF AID: THE PRESERVER OF THE FINANCIAL CREDIT OF THE UNITED STATES AND FOUNDER OF THE FEDERALIST PARTY

1757-1804

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

That amazing boy genius of the American Revolution, Alexander Hamilton, lived through a career, the splendor and romance of which have scarcely ever been excelled. From his tragic birth and youth among the islands of the West Indies, through his spectacular boyish championing of the Revolution in New York City, his ardent friendship and support of the two great generals, Washington and Schuyler, down to his supremely able leadership in statecraft, and his sudden, tragic death, the career of Hamilton was brilliant almost beyond the telling. It should be read and studied by every American.

Unfortunately we learn but little of that life from Hamilton's own pen, the pen which best of all possessed the skill to make its master known. Hamilton, supreme in so many things, was perhaps the ablest writer of his time, as his papers in the "Federalist" so strongly evidence. Of himself, however, he seems only once to have written at any length. In 1797, a distant relative in Scotland wrote to the now celebrated statesman claiming kinship with him, a kinship which had been neglected in the days of his impoverished youth and his father's disgrace. Hamilton accepted the advance with genial courtesy, and at the request of his correspondent briefly outlined his own career in the following letter.

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH IN A LETTER TO SCOTLAND

ALBANY, New York, May 2, 1797.

SOME days since I received with great pleasure your letter of the 10th of March. The mark it affords of your kind attention, and the particular account it gives me of so many relations in Scotland are extremely gratifying to me. You,

no doubt, have understood that my father's affairs at a very early day went to wreck, so as to have rendered his situation during the greatest part of his life far from eligible. This state of things occasioned a separation between him and me, when I was very young, and threw me upon the bounty of my mother's relatives, some of whom were then wealthy, though by vicissitudes to which human affairs are so liable, they have been since much reduced and broken up. Myself, at about sixteen, came to this country. Having always had a strong propensity to literary pursuits, by a course of study and laborious exertion, I was able, by the age of nineteen, to qualify myself for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in the (Columbia) College of New York, and to lay the foundation by preparatory study for the future profession of the law.

The American Revolution supervened. My principles led me to take part in it; at nineteen, I entered into the American army as captain of artillery. Shortly after I became, by his invitation, aide-de-camp to General Washington, in which station I served until the commencement of that campaign which ended with the siege of York in Virginia, and the capture of Cornwallis's army. The campaign I made at the head of a corps of light infantry, with which I was present at the siege of York, and engaged in some interesting operations.

At the period of peace with Great Britain I found myself a member of Congress, by appointment of the legislature of this state.

After the peace I settled in the city of New York, in the practice of the law, and was in a very lucrative course of practice, when the derangement of our public affairs, by the feebleness of the general Confederation, drew me again reluctantly into public life. I became a member of the Convention which framed the present constitution of the United States; and having taken part in this measure, I conceived myself to be under an obligation to lend my aid toward putting the machine in some regular motion. Hence, I did not hesitate to accept the offer of President Washington to undertake the office of Secretary of the Treasury.

In that office I met with many intrinsic difficulties, and many artificial ones, proceeding from passions, not very worthy, common to human nature, and which act with pecu-

liar force in republics. The object, however, was effected of establishing public credit and introducing order in the finances.

Public office in this country, has few attractions. The pecuniary emolument is so inconsiderable as to amount to a sacrifice to any man who can employ his time with advantage in any liberal profession. The opportunity of doing good, from the jealousy of power and the spirit of faction, is too small in any station to warrant a long continuance of private sacrifices. The enterprises of party had so far succeeded as materially to weaken the necessary influence and energy of the executive authority, and so far diminish the power of doing good in that department, as greatly to take away the motives which a virtuous man might have for making sacrifices. The prospect was even bad for gratifying in future the love of fame, if that passion was to be the spring of action.

The union of these motives, with the reflections of prudence in relation to a growing family, determined me as soon as my plan had attained a certain maturity, to withdraw from office. This I did by a resignation about two years since, when I resumed the profession of the law in the city of New York under every advantage I could desire.

It is a pleasant reflection to me that since the commencement of my connection with General Washington to the present time, I have possessed a flattering share of his confidence and friendship.

Having given you a brief sketch of my political career, I proceed to some further family details.

In the year 1780 I married the second daughter of General Schuyler, a gentleman of one of the best families of this country, of large fortune, and no less personal and political consequence. It is impossible to be happier than I am in a wife; and I have five children, four sons and a daughter, the eldest a son somewhat past fifteen, who all promise as well as their years permit, and yield me much satisfaction. Though I have been too much in public life to be wealthy, my situation is extremely comfortable, and leaves me nothing to wish for but a continuance of health. With this blessing, the profits of my profession and other prospects authorize an expectation of such additions to my resources, as will render

the eve of my life easy and agreeable, so far as may depend upon this consideration.

It is now several months since I have heard from my father, who continued at the island of St. Vincent's. My anxiety at this silence would be greater than it is, were it not for the considerable interruption and precariousness of intercourse which is produced by the war.

I have strongly pressed the old gentleman to come and reside with me, which would afford him every enjoyment of which his advanced age is capable; but he has declined it on the ground that the advice of his physicians leads him to fear that the change of climate would be fatal to him. The next thing for me is, in proportion to my means, to endeavor to increase his comforts where he is.

It will give me the greatest pleasure to receive your son Robert at my house in New York, and still more to be of use to him; to which end my recommendation and interest will not be wanting, and I hope not unavailing. It is my intention to embrace the opening which your letter affords me to extend my intercourse with my relations in your country, which will be a new source of satisfaction to me.

THE END

LAFAYETTE

"THE FRIEND OF AMERICA": THE FIRST CHAMPION OF REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE

1757-1834

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Seldom is it given to a young man to win in two different countries such abounding honor as was attained in both America and France by the young Marquis de Lafayette. His boyhood's precocity rivaled that of Hamilton, that other remarkable youth of the American Revolution, who was born some six months earlier in the same year. Marie Jean Paul Roch Yves Gilbert Motier, Marquis de Lafayette, to give him his full list of names, belonged to the high French nobility of the province of Auvergne. He succeeded to the headship of his family at thirteen, was married at sixteen, and before he was twenty had defied the French king and in open disobedience of orders sailed from France to lend his aid to America in her Revolution. Not only did he do splendid service as a soldier, but, returning to France and easily winning pardon for his former disobedience, he was largely instrumental in persuading France to lend the Americans their aid.

Lafayette's autobiography treats only of his glorious American career. His part in the French Revolution was equally able and heroic, if not so richly successful. He had become a believer in American liberty and democracy, and when the French began their revolution aiming at the same invaluable treasures, the renowned young Lafayette, still scarcely thirty years of age, became the first great leader of the movement. He was called its "Cromwell." For a time he was all-powerful, but his strong and moderate justice was ill-suited to the first frenzy of the French democracy. The political revolution soon swept far beyond a leader who satisfied neither the haughty court nor the furious mob, and after having been the first general of the new France and won its first battles against a foreign enemy, Lafayette was rejected by his own army and compelled to flee into exile. He was arrested by the Austrians as being the champion of the very men from whom he fled and was kept in prison until 1797. Napoleon then secured his release; but Lafayette refused to lend himself to the schemes of the

conqueror and dwelt in dignified retirement until after Napoleon's downfall.

Lafayette's unfinished autobiography was written during this retirement, but an ardent, honest republican such as he, could find little to please him in writing of the French Revolution. We can easily trace in his work the eager pride with which he tells of his American career and then the increasing reluctance with which he approaches the later days in France, until at length he casts aside his unwilling pen. A heart so noble as that of Lafayette could dwell at ease only among noble thoughts.

In his old age, he was again a champion of republicanism in France, a leader of parliamentary opposition to tyranny, and the commander of the National Guard in the Revolution of 1830 which overthrew absolutism and established the French Constitutional Monarchy.

MEMOIRS WRITTEN BY MYSELF

When, devoted from early youth to the ambition of liberty, I beheld no limit to the path that I had opened for myself, it appeared to me that I was sufficiently fulfilling my destiny, and satisfying my glory, by rushing incessantly forward, and leaving to others the care of collecting the recollections, as well as the fruits, of my labor.

After having enjoyed an uninterrupted course of good fortune for fifteen years, I presented myself, with a favorable prospect of success, before the coalition of kings, and the aristocracy of Europe: I was overthrown by the simultaneous fury of French jacobinism. My person was then given up to the vengeance of my natural enemies, and my reputation to the calumnies of those self-styled patriots who had so lately violated every sworn and national guarantee. It is well known that the regimen of my five years' imprisonment was not favorable to literary occupations, and when, on my deliverance from prison, I was advised to write an explanation of my conduct, I was disgusted with all works of the kind, by the numerous memoirs or notices by which so many persons had trespassed upon the attention of the public. Events had also spoken for us; and many accusers, and many accusations, had fallen into oblivion.

As soon as I returned to France, my friends requested me to write memoirs: I found excuses for not doing so in my

reluctance to judge with severity the first jacobin chiefs who have shared since in my proscription,—the *Girondins,* who have died for those very principles they had opposed and persecuted in me,—the king and queen, whose lamentable fate only allows me to pride myself upon some services I have rendered them,—and the vanquished royalists, who are at present deprived of fortune, and exposed to every arbitrary measure. I ought to add, likewise, that, happy in my retreat, in the bosom of my family, and occupied with agricultural pursuits, I know not how to purloin one moment from the enjoyments of my domestic life.

But my friends have renewed their request, and, to comply in some degree with it, I have consented to place in order the few papers that I still possess, assemble together some relations which have been already published, and unite, by notes, the whole collection, in which my children and friends may one day find materials for a less insignificant work.

As to myself, I acknowledged that my indolence in this respect is owing to the intimate conviction which I feel, that liberty will ultimately be established in the old as well as in the new world, and that then the history of our revolutions will put all things and all persons in their proper places.

FIRST VOYAGE AND FIRST CAMPAIGN IN AMERICA

To my friends [1]—If I were to confound, as is too often done, obstinacy with firmness, I should blush at beginning these memoirs, after having so long refused to do so, and at even in-

[1] Note by M. de Lafayette upon the *Memoirs written by himself and his American correspondence.*—Many papers relating to the first years of my public life have been destroyed during the reign of terror. An imperfect copy of these memoirs has been saved: this ought to have been re-written; I have preferred copying it precisely as it was originally composed.

Several letters written from America had been copied by my wife for Dr. Dubrucil, (physician to the king and to *la Charité,* at St. Germain-en-laza, deceased 1785,) whose friendship was the pride of one portion of my life, and who has filled the remainder of it with a deep and tender recollection. Those papers have been preserved; it would be necessary to suppress some repetitions and insignificant details, but I have left them almost all untouched, because, whilst forming this collection, I felt pleasure in recalling the sentiments that had animated me at various periods of my existence.

The Duke d'Ayen, my father-in-law, was not one of the least hasty and severe censurers of my departure for America, but he restored to

creasing their apparent egotism by my style, instead of sheltering myself under cover of the third person; but I will not yield a half compliance to the request of that tender friendship which is far more valuable to me than the ephemeral success which a journal might obtain. It is sufficient for me to know that this relation, intended for a few friends only, will never extend beyond their circle: it even possesses two very great advantages over many celebrated books; these are, that the public not being concerned in this work it cannot need a preface, and that the dedication of affection cannot require an epistle.

It would be too poetical to place myself at once in another hemisphere, and too minute to dwell upon the particulars of my birth, which soon followed the death of my father at Minden;[2] of my education in Auvergne, with tender and revered relations; of my removal, at twelve years of age, to a college at Paris,[3] where I soon lost my virtuous mother,[4] and where the death of her father rendered me rich, although I had been born, comparatively speaking, poor; of some schoolboy successes, inspired by the love of glory and somewhat disturbed by that of liberty; of my entrance into the regiment of the black musketeers, which only interrupted my studies on review days; and finally, of my marriage,[5] at the age of sixteen, preceded by a residence at the academy of

me his favor, with all the kindness and sincerity which characterized him: his affectionate congratulations deeply touched my heart. The same feeling induces me at the present moment to repeat some details contained in the letters I addressed to him.

[2] Michel-Louis-Christophe-Roch-Gilbert de Motier, Marquis de Lafayette, colonel of the grenadiers of France, Chevalier de St. Louis, killed at the battle of Minden before the age of twenty-five.

[3] The college du Plessis.

[4] Marie-Louise-Julie de la Rivière, died at Paris the 12th of April, 1770, some days before her father Joseph-Yves-Thibauld-Hyacinthe, Marquis de la Rivière.

[5] Previous to the marriage of M. de Lafayette, we have only one letter written by him at fourteen years of age, the 8th of February, 1772, which will be read perhaps with some curiosity. It is addressed to his cousin, Mademoiselle de Chavaniac.

"I have just received, my dear cousin, your letter, and the good account you give me of my grandmother's health. After that, which was what first touched my heart, I was much interested by the account of the hunt of the proprietor of the forests of Lata. I should like very much to know whether those dogs that neither walk nor bark contributed to the success of the expedition? The details of that hunt would have

Versailles. I have still less to say relating to my entrance into the world; to the short favor I enjoyed as constituting one member of a youthful society; to some promises to the regiment de Noailles; and to the unfavorable opinion entertained of me owing to my habitual silence when I did not think the subjects discussing worthy of being canvassed. The bad effects produced by disguised self-love and an observing disposition, were not softened by a natural simplicity of manner, which, without being improper on any great occasion, rendered it impossible for me to bend to the graces of the court, or to the charms of a supper in the capital.

You ask me at what period I first experienced my ardent love of liberty and glory? I recollect no time of my life anterior to my enthusiasm for anecdotes of glorious deeds, and to my projects of traveling over the world to acquire fame. At eight years of age, my heart beat when I heard of an hyæna that had done some injury, and caused still more alarm, in our neighborhood, and the hope of meeting it was the ob-

amused me very much; if I had been speaking to you of a new-fashioned cap, I should have thought it my duty to have described to you its figure and proportions, with a compass in my hand.

"Our cousin's marriage is broken off; there is another one on the carpet, but they are obliged to lower their tone exceedingly. Mademoiselle de Roncherolles, a place with Madame de Bourbon, of a thousand crowns a-year, and five thousand small livres a-year—that is the whole amount. You see that this is a very short abridgment of the other intended matches. My uncle, who came to see me the other day, consents to the marriage, on condition that the Prince de Condé will promise one of his regiments of cavalry to the cousin. Madame de Montboissier thinks this is asking too much, and told M. le Marquis de Canillic that, in truth, if he were so difficult, her husband would no longer take any part in his affairs; this offended him, and some high words passed on both sides. The nephew does not care much about the marriage. He said, there were in his own province far better matches, which he named, that would not be refused him.

"I thought I had written you word that the Cardinal de La Roche-Aimon was abbé de St. Germain. It is said that M. de Briges has the barony de Mercœur. M. de la Vauguyon has died, little regretted either by the court or by the town. The ball of last Thursday is put off to the 15th, that is to say, for a week hence. I dined, the day before yesterday, Thursday, with M. de la Tour d'Auvergne, who is on a complimentary footing with M. de Turenne, now Duke de Bouillon. He told us he should lose perhaps a million from politeness. You will recognize him by that phrase.

"Adieu, dear cousin; my respects, if you please, to all the family; M. de Fayon presents his to you, and I remain your obedient servant,

"LAFAYETTE."

ject of all my walks. When I arrived at college, nothing ever interrupted my studies, except my ardent wish of studying without restraint. I never deserved to be chastised; but, in spite of my usual gentleness, it would have been dangerous to have attempted to do so; and I recollect with pleasure that, when I was to describe in rhetoric a perfect courser, I sacrificed the hope of obtaining a premium, and described the one who, on perceiving the whip, threw down his rider. Republican anecdotes always delighted me, and when my new connections wished to obtain for me a place at court, I did not hesitate displeasing them to preserve my independence.[6] I was in that frame of mind when I first learned the troubles in America; they only became thoroughly known in Europe in 1776, and the memorable declaration of the 4th of July reached France at the close of that same year.

After having crowned herself with laurels and enriched herself with conquests; after having become mistress of all seas; and after having insulted all nations, England had turned her pride against her own colonies. North America had long been displeasing to her; she wished to add new vexations to former injuries, and to destroy the most sacred privileges. The Americans, attached to the mother country, contented themselves at first with merely uttering complaints; they only accused the ministry, and the whole nation rose up against them; they were termed insolent and rebellious, and at length declared the enemies of their country: thus did the obstinacy of the king, the violence of the ministers, and the arrogance of the English nation, oblige thirteen of their colonies to render themselves independent. Such a glorious cause had never before attracted the attention of mankind; it was the last struggle of Liberty; and had she then been vanquished, neither hope nor asylum would have remained for her. The oppressors and oppressed were to receive a powerful lesson; the great work was to be accomplished, or the rights of humanity were to fall beneath its ruin. The

[6] A place in the household of a prince of royal blood. The Marshal de Noailles wished for this arrangement. To prevent it without openly opposing the will of those he loved, M. de Lafayette took an opportunity of displeasing, by a few words, the prince, to whose person they were desirous of attaching him, and all negotiations on the subject were thus broken off.

destiny of France and that of her rival were to be decided at the same moment; England was to lose, with the new states, an important commerce, of which she derived the sole advantage,—one quarter of her subjects, who were constantly augmenting by rapid increase of population, and by emigration from all parts of Europe,—in a word, more than half of the most beautiful portion of the British territory. But if she retained possession of her thirteen colonies, all was ended for our West Indies, our possessions in Asia and Africa, our maritime commerce, and consequently our navy and our political existence.

(1776.) When I first learned the subject of this quarrel, my heart espoused warmly the cause of liberty, and I thought of nothing but of adding also the aid of my banner. Some circumstances, which it would be needless to relate, had taught me to expect only obstacles in this case from my own family; I depended, therefore, solely upon myself, and I ventured to adopt for a device on my arms these words—"*Cur non?*" that they might equally serve as an encouragement to myself, and as a reply to others. Silas Deane was then at Paris; but the ministers feared to receive him, and his voice was overpowered by the louder accents of Lord Stormont. He dispatched privately to America some old arms, which were of little use, and some young officers, who did but little good, the whole directed by M. de Beaumarchais; and when the English ambassador spoke to our court, it denied having sent any cargoes, ordered those that were preparing to be discharged, and dismissed from our ports all American privateers. Whilst wishing to address myself in a direct manner to Mr. Deane, I became the friend of Kalb, a German in our employ, who was applying for service with the *insurgents,* (the expression in use at that time), and who became my interpreter. He was the person sent by M. de Choiseul to examine the English colonies; and on his return he received some money, but never succeeded in obtaining an audience, so little did that minister in reality think of the revolution whose retrograde movements some persons have inscribed to him! When I presented to Mr. Deane my boyish face, (for I was scarcely nineteen years of age,) I spoke more of my ardor in the cause than of my experience; but I dwelt much

upon the effect my departure would excite in France, and he signed our mutual agreement. The secrecy with which this negotiation and my preparations were made appears almost a miracle; family, friends, ministers, French spies and English spies, all were kept completely in the dark as to my intentions. Amongst my discreet confidants, I owe much to M. du Boismartin,[7] secretary of the Count de Broglie, and to the Count de Broglie himself, whose affectionate heart, when all his efforts to turn me from this project had proved in vain, entered into my views with even paternal tenderness.

Preparations were making to send a vessel to America, when very bad tidings arrived from thence. New York, Long Island, White Plains, Fort Washington, and the Jerseys, had seen the American forces successively destroyed by thirty-three thousand Englishmen or Germans. Three thousand Americans alone remained in arms, and these were closely pursued by General Howe. From that moment all the credit of the insurgents vanished; to obtain a vessel for them was impossible: the envoys themselves thought it right to express to me their own discouragement, and persuade me to abandon my project. I called upon Mr. Deane, and I thanked him for his frankness. "Until now, sir," said I, "you have only seen my ardor in your cause, and that may not prove at present wholly useless. I shall purchase a ship to carry out your officers; we must feel confidence in the future, and it is especially in the hour of danger that I wish to share your fortune." My project was received with approbation; but it was necessary afterwards to find money, and to purchase and arm a vessel secretly: all this was accomplished with the greatest dispatch.

The period was, however, approaching, which had been long fixed for my taking a journey to England;[8] I could not refuse to go without risking the discovery of my secret, and by consenting to take this journey I knew I could better conceal my preparations for a greater one. This last measure was also thought most expedient by MM. Franklin and Deane; for the doctor himself was then in France; and

[7] M. du Boismartin was the person sent to Bordeaux to secure the purchase and equipment of the ship that M. de Lafayette intended for the United States.

[8] With the Prince de Poix. This journey lasted three weeks.

although I did not venture to go to his home, for fear of being seen, I corresponded with him through M. Carmichael, an American less generally known. I arrived in London with M. de Poix; and I first paid my respects to Bancroft, the American, and afterwards to his British Majesty. A youth of nineteen may be, perhaps, too fond of playing a trick upon the king he is going to fight with,—of dancing at the house of Lord Germain, minister for the English colonies, and at the house of Lord Rawdon, who had just returned from New York,—and of seeing at the opera that Clinton whom he was afterwards to meet at Monmouth. But whilst I concealed my intentions, I openly avowed my sentiments; I often defended the Americans; I rejoiced at their success at Trenton; and my spirit of opposition obtained for me an invitation to breakfast with Lord Shelbourne. I refused the offers made me to visit the sea ports, the vessels fitting out against the *rebels*, and everything that might be construed into an abuse of confidence. At the end of three weeks, when it became necessary for me to return home, whilst refusing my uncle,[9] the ambassador, to accompany him to court, I confided to him my strong desire to take a trip to Paris. He proposed saying that I was ill during my absence. I should not have made use of this stratagem myself, but I did not object to his doing so.

After having suffered dreadfully in the channel, and being reminded, as a consolation, how very short the voyage would be, I arrived at M. de Kalb's house in Paris, concealed myself three days at Chaillot, saw a few of my friends and some Americans, and set out for Bordeaux, where I was for some time unexpectedly delayed.[10] I took advantage of that delay

[9] The Marquis de Noailles, brother to the Duke d'Aven, and uncle to Madame de Lafayette.

[10] M. de Lafayette learnt, at Bordeaux, that his intended departure was known at Versailles, and that the order to prevent it had been already issued. After having taken his ship to the port of the Passage, he returned himself to Bordeaux, and wrote to the ministers, to his family and friends. Amongst the latter was M. de Coigny, to whom he sent a confidential person, and who bade him entertain no hopes of obtaining the permission he wished for. Pretending to repair to Marseilles, where he had received an order to join his father-in-law, who was going into Italy, he set off in a postchaise with an officer named Mauroy, who was desirous of going to America. Some leagues from Bordeaux he got on horseback, disguised as a courier, and rode on before

to send to Paris, from whence the intelligence I received was by no means encouraging; but as my messenger was followed on his road by one from the government, I lost not a moment in setting sail, and the orders of my sovereign were only able to overtake me at Passage, a Spanish port, at which we stopped on our way. The letters from my own family were extremely violent, and those from the government were peremptory. I was forbidden to proceed to the American continent under the penalty of disobedience; I was enjoined to repair instantly to Marseilles, and await there further orders. A sufficient number of commentaries were not wanting upon the consequences of such an anathema, the laws of the state, and the power and displeasure of the government: but the grief of his wife, who was pregnant, and the thoughts of his family and friends, had far more effect upon M. de Lafayette.[11] As his vessel could no longer be stopped, he returned to Bordeaux to enter into a justification of his own conduct; and, in a declaration to M. de Fumel, he took upon himself all the consequences of his present evasion. As the court did not deign to relax in its determination, he wrote to M. de Maurepas that that silence was a tacit consent, and his own departure took place soon after that joking dispatch. After having set out on the road to Marseilles, he retraced his steps, and, disguised as a courier, he had almost escaped all danger, when, at Saint Jean de Luz, a young girl recognized him; but a sign from him silenced her, and her adroit fidelity turned away all suspicion. It was thus that M. de Lafayette rejoined his ship, the 26th of April 1777; and on that same day, after six months' anxiety and labor, he set sail for the American continent.

(1777.) As soon as M. de Lafayette had recovered from

the carriage, which took the road to Bayonne. They remained two or three hours in that town, and whilst Mauroy was arranging some necessary affairs, M. de Lafayette remained lying on some straw in the stable. It was the postmaster's daughter who recognized the pretended courier at Saint Jean de Luz, from having seen him when returning from the Passage harbor to Bordeaux.

[11] These memoirs, written until now in the first person, change here to the third person, in spite of the kind of engagement taken in the first page to continue them in the former manner. We are ignorant of the cause of the inconsistency thus offered by the manuscript, which is, however, completely written in the general's own hand.

the effects of sea sickness, he studied the language and trade he was adopting. A heavy ship, two bad cannons, and some guns, could not have escaped from the smallest privateer. In his present situation, he resolved rather to blow up the vessel than to surrender; he concerted measures to achieve this end with a brave Dutchman named Bedaulx, whose sole alternative, if taken, would have been the gibbet. The captain insisted upon stopping at the islands; but government orders would have been found there, and he followed a direct course, less from choice than from compulsion.[12] At forty leagues from shore, they were met by a small vessel: the captain turned pale, but the crew were attached to M. de Lafayette, and the officers were numerous: they made a show of resistance. It turned out, fortunately, to be an American ship, whom they vainly endeavored to keep up with; but scarcely had the former lost sight of M. de Lafayette's vessel, when it fell in with two English frigates,—and this is not the only time when the elements seemed bent on opposing M. de Lafayette, as if with the intention of saving him. After having encountered for seven weeks various perils and chances, he arrived at Georgetown, in Carolina. Ascending the river in a canoe, his foot touched at length the American soil, and he swore that he would conquer or perish in that cause. Landing at midnight at Major Huger's house,[13] he found a

[12] The court of France dispatched orders to the Leeward and Windward Islands to stop him on his road, because the ship, not being able to take out papers for North America, was to have stopped in the Spanish islands. Mr. Sparks relates that M. de Lafayette declared to the captain that the ship belonged to him, and that if he offered the slightest resistance, he would take from him the command and give it to the mate. But as he soon discovered that the real motive of the captain's resistance was a cargo belonging to him of 8,000 dollars, M. de Lafayette secured to him its full value upon his own private fortune, and thus succeeded in overcoming all his scruples.

[13] When they landed, says Mr. Sparks, a distant light served to guide them. As they approached the house from whence it issued, the dogs barked, and the people took them for a band of marauders landing from an enemy's ship. They were asked who they were, and what they wanted. Baron Kalb replied, and all suspicions vanished. The next morning the weather was beautiful. The novelty of all that surrounded him,—the room, the bed covered with mosquito nets, the black servants who came to ask his commands, the beauty and foreign aspect of the country which he beheld from his windows, and which was covered by a rich vegetation,—all united to produce on M. de Lafayette a magical effect, and excite in him a variety of inexpressible sensations.

vessel sailing for France, which appeared only waiting for his letters. Several of the officers landed, others remained on board, and all hastened to proceed to Charleston.

This beautiful city is worthy of its inhabitants, and everything there announced not only comfort but even luxury. Without knowing much of M. de Lafayette, the generals Howe,[14] Moultrie, and Gulden, received him with the utmost kindness and attention. The new works were shown him, and also that battery which Moultrie afterwards defended so extremely well, and which the English appear, we must acknowledge, to have seized the only possible means of destroying. Several adventurers, the refuse of the islands, endeavored vainly to unite themselves to M. de Lafayette, and to infuse into his mind their own feelings and prejudices. Having procured horses, he set out with six officers for Philadelphia. His vessel had arrived, but it was no longer protected by fortune, and on its return home it was lost on the bar of Charleston. To repair to the congress of the United States, M. de Lafayette rode nearly nine hundred miles on horseback; before reaching the capital of Pennsylvania, he was obliged to travel through the two Carolinas, Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware. Whilst studying the language and customs of the inhabitants, he observed also new productions of nature, and new methods of cultivation: vast forests and immense rivers combine to give to that country an appearance of youth and majesty. After a fatiguing journey of one month, he beheld at length that Philadelphia, so well known in the present day, and whose future grandeur Penn appeared to designate when he laid the first stone of its foundation.

After having accomplished his noble maneuvers at Trenton and Princetown, General Washington had remained in his camp at Middlebrook. The English, finding themselves frustrated in their first hopes, combined to make a decisive campaign. Burgoyne was already advancing with ten thousand men, preceded by his proclamations and his savages. Ticonderoga, a famous stand of arms, was abandoned by

[14] An American, who must not be confounded with the two brothers of that name who commanded the one the English army, the other the English fleet.

Saint-Clair; he drew upon himself much public odium by this deed, but he saved the only corps whom the militia could rally round. Whilst the generals were busied assembling that militia, the congress recalled them, sent Gates in their place, and used all possible means to support him. At that same time the great English army, of about eighteen thousand men, had sailed from New York, and the two Howes were uniting their forces for a secret enterprise; Rhode Island was occupied by an hostile corps, and General Cinton, who had remained at New York, was there preparing for an expedition. To be able to withstand so many various blows, General Washington, leaving Putnam on the north river, crossed over the Delaware, and encamped, with eleven thousand men, within reach of Philadelphia.

It was under these circumstances that M. de Lafayette first arrived in America; but the moment, although important to the common cause, was peculiarly unfavorable to strangers. The Americans were displeased with the pretentions, and disgusted with the conduct, of many Frenchmen; the imprudent selections they had in some cases made, the extreme boldness of some foreign adventurers, the jealousy of the army, and strong national prejudices, all contributed to confound disinterested zeal with private ambition, and talents with quackery. Supported by the promises which had been given by Mr. Deane, a numerous band of foreigners besieged the congress; their chief was a clever but very imprudent man, and although a good officer, his excessive vanity amounted almost to madness. With M. de Lafayette, Mr. Deane had sent out a fresh detachment, and every day such crowds arrived, that the congress had finally adopted the plan of not listening to any stranger. The coldness with which M. de Lafayette was received, might have been taken as a dismissal; but, without appearing disconcerted by the manner in which the deputies addressed him,[15] he entreated them to return to congress, and read the following note:—

"After the sacrifices I have made, I have the right to

[15] When he arrived at Philadelphia, M. de Lafayette delivered his letters to Mr. Lovell, president of the committee for foreign affairs. The next day he proceeded to congress: Mr. Lovell came out of the meeting, and told him there was but little hope of his request being acceded to. Suspecting that his letters had not been read, M. de

exact two favors: one is, to serve at my own expense,—the other is, to serve at first as volunteer."

This style, to which they were so little accustomed, awakened their attention; the dispatches from the envoys were read over, and, in a very flattering resolution, the rank of major-general was granted to M. de Lafayette. Amongst the various officers who accompanied him, several were strangers to him; he was interested, however, for them all, and to those whose services were not accepted an indemnity for their trouble was granted. Some months afterwards, M. —— drowned himself in the Schuylkill, and the loss of that impetuous and imprudent man was perhaps a fortunate circumstance.

The two Howes having appeared before the capes of the Delaware, General Washington came to Philadelphia, and M. de Lafayette beheld for the first time that great man.[16] Although he was surrounded by officers and citizens, it was impossible to mistake for a moment his majestic figure and deportment; nor was he less distinguished by the noble affability of his manner. M. de Lafayette accompanied him in his examination of the fortifications. Invited by the General to establish himself in his house, he looked upon it from that moment as his own: with this perfect ease and sim-

Lafayette wrote the note which will be found in the text. The resolution of the congress concerning him, deliberated the 31st of July, is expressed in the following manner: "Seeing that the Marquis de Lafayette, on account of his great zeal in the cause of liberty in which the United States are engaged, has quitted his family and country, and has come to offer his services to the United States, without demanding either pay or private indemnity, and that he desires to expose his life in our cause,—resolved, that his services be accepted, and that, on account of his zeal, illustrious family and connections, he shall have the rank and commission of major-general in the army of the United States." The real intention of this resolution was to give a rank to M. de Lafayette, and to leave to General Washington the right and care of confiding to him a command in unison with that rank.

[16] He was presented, for the first time, to Washington, says Mr. Sparks, at a dinner, at which several members of congress were present. When they were separating, Washington drew Lafayette aside, expressed much kindness for him, complimented him upon his zeal and his sacrifices, and invited him to consider the headquarters as his own house, adding, with a smile, that he could not promise him the luxuries of a court, but that, as he was become an American soldier, he would doubtless submit cheerfully to the customs and privations of a republican army. The next day Washington visited the forts of the Delaware, and invited Lafayette to accompany him,

plicity was formed the tie that united two friends, whose confidence and attachment were to be cemented by the strongest interests of humanity.

The American army, stationed some miles from Philadelphia, was waiting until the movements of the hostile army should be decided: the General himself reviewed the troops; M. de Lafayette arrived there the same day. About eleven thousand men, ill armed, and still worse clothed, presented a strange spectacle to the eye of the young Frenchman: their clothes were parti-colored, and many of them were almost naked; the best clad wore *hunting shirts*, large gray linen coats which were much used in Carolina. As to their military tactics, it will be sufficient to say that, for a regiment ranged in order of battle to move forward on the right of its line, it was necessary for the left to make a continued counter march. They were always arranged in two lines, the smallest men in the first line; no other distinction as to height was ever observed. In spite of these disadvantages, the soldiers were fine, and the officers zealous; virtue stood in place of science, and each day added both to experience and discipline. Lord Stirling, more courageous than judicious, another general, who was often intoxicated, and Greene, whose talents were only then known to his immediate friends, commanded as majors-general. General Knox, who had changed the profession of bookseller to that of artillery officer, was there also, and had himself formed other officers, and created an artillery. "We must feel embarrassed," said General Washington, on his arrival, "to exhibit ourselves before an officer who has just quitted French troops." "It is to learn, and not to teach, that I come hither," replied M. de Lafayette; and that modest tone, which was not common in Europeans, produced a very good effect.

After having menaced the Delaware, the English fleet again disappeared, and during some days the Americans amused themselves by making jokes at its expense. These jokes, however, ceased when it reappeared in the Chesapeake; and, in order to approach it more closely during the disembarkation, the patriot army crossed through the town. Their heads were covered with green branches, and marching to the sound of drums and fifes, these soldiers, in spite of their state of nudity,

offered an agreeable spectacle to the eyes of all the citizens. General Washington was marching at their head, and M. de Lafayette was by his side. The army stationed itself upon the heights of Wilmington, and that of the enemy landed in the Elk river, at the bottom of Chesapeake bay. The very day they landed, General Washington exposed himself to danger in the most imprudent manner; after having reconnoitered for a long time the enemy's position, he was overtaken by a storm during a very dark night, entered a farm house close to the hostile army, and, from a reluctance to change his own opinion, remained there with General Greene, M. de Lafayette, and their aide-de-camp; but when at daybreak he quitted the farm, he acknowledged that any one traitor might have caused his ruin. Some days later, Sullivan's division joined the army, which augmented it in all to thirteen thousand men. This Major-General Sullivan made a good beginning, but a bad ending, in an intended surprise on Staten Island.

If, by making too extensive a plan of attack, the English committed a great error, it must also be acknowledged that the Americans were not irreproachable in their manner of defense. Burgoyne, leading his army, with their heads bent upon the ground, into woods from whence he could not extricate them, dragged on, upon a single road, his numerous cannons and rich military equipages. Certain of not being attacked from behind, the Americans could dispute every step they took: this kind of warfare attracted the militia, and Gates improved each day in strength. Every tree sheltered a skillful rifleman, and the resources offered by military tactics, and the talents even of their chiefs, had become useless to the English. The corps left in New York could, it is true, laugh at the corps of Putnam, but it was too feeble to succor Burgoyne; and instead of being able to secure his triumph, its own fate was even dependent upon his.

During that time, Howe was only thinking of Philadelphia, and it was at the expense of the northern expedition that he was repairing thither by an enormous circuit. But, on the other side, why were the English permitted to land so tranquilly? Why was the moment allowed to pass when their army was divided by the river Elk? Why in the south were so many false movements and so much hesitation displayed?

Because the Americans had hitherto had combats but not battles; because, instead of harassing an army and disputing hollows, they were obliged to protect an open city, and maneuver in a plain, close to an hostile army, who, by attacking them from behind, might completely ruin them. General Washington, had he followed the advice of the people, would have enclosed his army in a city, and thus have entrusted to one hazard the fate of America; but, whilst refusing to commit such an act of folly, he was obliged to make some sacrifice, and gratify the nation by a battle. Europe even expected it; and although he had been created a dictator for six months, the General thought he ought to submit everything to the orders of congress, and to the deliberations of a council of war.

After having advanced as far as Wilmington, the general had detached a thousand men under Maxwell, the most ancient brigadier in the army. At the first march of the English, he was beaten by their advance guard near Christiana Bridge. During that time the army took but an indifferent station at Newport; they then removed a little south, waited two days for the enemy, and, at the moment when these were marching upon their right wing, a nocturnal council of war decided that the army was to proceed to the Brandywine. The stream bearing that name covered its front; the ford called Chad's Ford, placed nearly in the center, was defended by batteries. It was in that hardly examined station that, in obedience to a letter from congress, the Americans awaited the battle. The evening of the 10th of September, Howe advanced in two columns, and, by a very fine movement, the left column (about 8000 men under Lord Cornwallis, with the grenadiers and guards) directed themselves towards the fords of Birmingham, three miles on our right; the other column continued its road, and about nine o'clock in the morning it appeared on the other side of the stream. The enemy was so near the skirts of the wood that it was impossible to judge of his force; some time was lost in mutual cannonading. General Washington walked along his two lines, and was received with acclamations which seemed to promise him success. The intelligence that was received of the movements of Cornwallis was both confused and contradictory; owing to the conformity

of name betwixt two roads that were of equal length and parallel to each other, the best officers were mistaken in their reports. The only musket shots that had been fired were from Maxwell, who killed several of the enemy, but was driven back upon the left of the American army, across a ford by which he had before advanced. Three thousand militia had been added to the army, but they were placed in the rear to guard some still more distant militia, and took no part themselves in the action.

Such was the situation of the troops when they learned the march of Lord Cornwallis towards the scarcely known fords of Birmingham: they then detached three divisions, forming about five thousand men, under the generals Sullivan, Stirling, and Stephen. M. de Lafayette, as volunteer, had always accompanied the general. The left wing remaining in a state of tranquillity, and the right appearing fated to receive all the heavy blows, he obtained permission to join Sullivan. At his arrival, which seemed to inspirit the troops, he found that, the enemy having crossed the ford, the corps of Sullivan had scarcely had time to form itself on a line in front of a thinly wooded forest. A few moments after, Lord Cornwallis formed in the finest order: advancing across the plain, his first line opened a brisk fire of musketry and artillery; the Americans returned the fire, and did much injury to the enemy; but their right and left wings having given way, the generals and several officers joined the central division, in which were M. de Lafayette and Stirling, and of which eight hundred men were commanded in a most brilliant manner by Conway, an Irishman, in the service of France. By separating that division from its two wings, and advancing through an open plain, in which they lost many men, the enemy united all his fire upon the center: the confusion became extreme; and it was whilst M. de Lafayette was rallying the troops that a ball passed through his leg;—at that moment all those remaining on the field gave way. M. de Lafayette was indebted to Gimat, his aide-de-camp, for the happiness of getting upon his horse. General Washington arrived from a distance with fresh troops; M. de Lafayette was preparing to join him, when loss of blood obliged him to stop and have his wound bandaged; he was even very near being taken.

Fugitives, cannon, and baggage now crowded without order into the road leading to Chester. The General employed the remaining daylight in checking the enemy: some regiments behaved extremely well, but the disorder was complete. During that time the ford of Chad was forced, the cannon taken, and the Chester road became the common retreat of the whole army. In the midst of that dreadful confusion, and during the darkness of the night, it was impossible to recover; but at Chester, twelve miles from the field of battle, they met with a bridge which it was necessary to cross; M. de Lafayette occupied himself in arresting the fugitives; some degree of order was reëstablished; the generals and the commander-in-chief arrived; and he had leisure to have his wound dressed.

It was thus, at twenty-six miles from Philadelphia, that the fate of that town was decided, (11th September, 1777.) The inhabitants had heard every cannon that was fired there; the two parties, assembled in two distinct bands in all the squares and public places, had awaited the event in silence. The last courier at length arrived, and the friends of liberty were thrown into consternation. The Americans had lost from 1000 to 1200 men. Howe's army was composed of about 12,000 men; their losses had been so considerable that their surgeons, and those in the country, were found insufficient, and they requested the American army to supply them with some for their prisoners. If the enemy had marched to Derby, the army would have been cut up and destroyed: they lost an all-important night; and this was perhaps their greatest fault, during a war in which they committed so many errors.

M. de Lafayette, having been conveyed by water to Philadelphia, was carefully attended to by the citizens, who were all interested in his situation and extreme youth. That same evening the congress determined to quit the city: a vast number of the inhabitants deserted their own hearths—whole families, abandoning their possessions, and uncertain of the future, took refuge in the mountains. M. de Lafayette was carried to Bristol in a boat; he there saw the fugitive congress, who only assembled again on the other side of the Susquehanna; he was himself conducted to Bethlehem, a Moravian establishment, where the mild religion of the brotherhood, the community of fortune, education, and interests, amongst that large

and simple family, formed a striking contrast to scenes of blood, and the convulsions occasioned by a civil war.

After the Brandywine defeat, the two armies maneuvered along the banks of the Schuylkill. General Washington still remained on a height above the enemy, and completely out of his reach; nor had they again an opportunity of cutting him off. Waine, an American brigadier, was detached to observe the English; but, being surprised during the night, near the White-Horse, by General Grey, he lost there the greatest part of his corps. At length Howe crossed the Schuylkill at Swede's Ford, and Lord Cornwallis entered Philadelphia.

In spite of the declaration of independence of the New States, everything there bore the appearance of a civil war. The names of Whig and Tory distinguished the republicans and royalists; the English army was still called the *regular troops;* the British sovereign was always designated by the name of *the king.* Provinces, towns, and families were divided by the violence of party spirit: brothers, officers in the two opposing armies, meeting by chance in their father's house, have seized their arms to fight with each other. Whilst, in all the rancor of their pride, the English committed horrible acts of license and cruelty,—whilst discipline dragged in her train those venal Germans who knew only how to kill, burn, and pillage,—in that same army were seen regiments of Americans, who, trampling under foot their brethren, assisted in enslaving their wasted country. Each canton contained a still greater number whose sole object was to injure the friends of liberty, and give information to those of despotism. To these inveterate Tories must be added the number of those whom fear, private interest, or religion, rendered adverse to the war. If the Presbyterians, the children of Cromwell and Fairfax, detested royalty, the Lutherans, who had sprung from it, were divided among themselves: the Quakers hated slaughter, but served willingly as guides to the royal troops. Insurrections were by no means uncommon: near the enemy's stations, farmers often shot each other; robbers were even encouraged. The republican chiefs were exposed to great dangers when they traveled through the country; it was always necessary for them to declare that they should pass the night in one house, then take possession of another, barricade them-

selves in it, and only sleep with their arms by their side. In the midst of these troubles, M. de Lafayette was no longer considered as a stranger; never was any adoption more complete than his own: and whilst, in the councils of war, he trembled when he considered that his voice (at twenty years of age) might decide the fate of two worlds, he was also initiated in those deliberations in which, by reassuring the Whigs, intimidating the Tories, supporting an ideal money, and redoubling their firmness in the hour of adversity, the American chiefs conducted that revolution through so many obstacles.

Confined to his bed for six weeks, M. de Lafayette suffered from his wound, but still more severely from his inactivity. The good Moravian brothers loved him, and deplored his warlike folly. Whilst listening to their sermons, he planned setting Europe and Asia in a flame. As he was no longer able to do anything but write, he wrote to the commander of la Martinique, and proposed to him to make a descent upon the English islands under American colors. He wrote also to M. de Maurepas, and offered to conduct some Americans to the Isle of France, concerting previously with individuals an attack upon the English factories.[17] From the particulars which have since become known, that project in India would have succeeded; but it was rejected at Versailles, where no answers were yet vouchsafed to M. de Lafayette's letters. Bouillé, more ardent in temper, would have adopted the whole plan, but he could not act without permission; and these delays led to the period of the war which M. de Lafayette was so desirous of bringing on.

During his residence at Bethlehem, the English entrenched themselves at Philadelphia. The two rivers which encom-

[17] From Bethlehem he wrote to M. de Bouillé, governor of the Windward Islands, to propose to him to attack the English islands under American colors. That general approved of the project, and forwarded it to the court, who would not, however, accept it. At the same period, M. de Lafayette, although in disgrace himself at court, wrote to the Count de Maurepas, to propose to him a still more important enterprise against the English factories, but also under American colors. The old minister, from prudential motives, did not adopt this project, but he spoke publicly in praise of it, and expressed, ever after, a great partiality for Lafayette. "He will end, one day," said he, smiling, "by unfurnishing the palace of Versailles to serve the American cause; for when he has taken anything into his head, it is impossible to resist him."—(Note by M. de Lafayette.)

passed the town were united by a chain of wooden palisades and good redoubts, partly covered by an inundation. A portion of their army was encamped at Germantown, five miles in advance of those lines; these were attacked, the 4th of October, by Washington, and although his left column was retarding by an absurd precedence of divisions, and misled by a thick fog,—although the advance guard of the right, under Conway, attacked in front what it ought to have attacked in flank, the enemy was not less taken by surprise and beaten; and the general, with his victorious wing, passed through the whole extent of the enemy's encampment. All things went on well until then; but a false movement of the left column, and still more the attack of a stone house which they should have turned, gave the enemy time to rally. Howe was thinking of a retreat, but Cornwallis arrived in haste with a reënforcement. The Americans repassed through the English encampment, and the action ended by a complete defeat. Many men were lost on both sides. General Agnew, an Englishman, and General Nash, an American, were killed. The Americans had some dragoons under Pulaski, the only one of the confederated Poles who had refused to accept a pardon. He was an intrepid knight, a libertine and devotee, and a better captain than general; he insisted on being a Pole on all occasions, and M. de Lafayette, after having contributed to his reception in the army, often exerted himself to effect a reconciliation betwixt him and the other officers.

Without waiting for his wound to be closed, M. de Lafayette returned to headquarters, twenty-five miles from Philadelphia. The enemy, who had fallen back upon their lines, attacked Fort Mifflin, upon an island, and Fort Red-Bank, on the left side of the Delaware. Some *chevaux de frise,* protected by the forts, and some galleys, stopped the fleet, magazines, and detachments which had been sent from the Chesapeake. Amongst the skirmishes which took place betwixt small parties of soldiers, the most remarkable one was the surprise of a corps of militia at Cevoked-Billet,[18] in which the English burned their wounded prisoners in a barn. Such was the situation of the south, when news was received of the capitulation of Burgoyne. That general, when he quitted Can-

[18] This name is very illegible in the manuscript.

ada, had made a diversion on his right; but Saint Leger had failed in an operation against Fort Schuyler; and he himself, by advancing towards Albany, appeared to have lost much time. Gates was constantly adding numerous militia to his continental troops. All the citizens being armed militia, a signal of alarm assembled them, or an order of state summoned them to march. But if that crusade was rather a voluntary one, their residence at the camp was still more dependent on their own inclination: the discipline was suitable to the formation of the corps. The continentalists, on the contrary, belonged to the thirteen states, of which each one supplied some regiments; the soldiers were either engaged for the war or for three years, which improper alternative was occasioned by republican jealousy. These regular troops had military regulations, a severe discipline, and the officers of each state vied with each other for promotion. Gates, placed in an entrenched position, in the center of woods, on the road to Albany, and with the North river on his right, had assembled sixteen thousand men; and this invasion of the enemy, by threatening New England, had served as an instant summons to her brave militia. They had already proved their strength at Bennington, where Stark had surrounded and destroyed a detachment belonging to Burgoyne. The enemy, having arrived within three miles of Gates, and not being able to make a circuit round him without abandoning their cannon and military accouterments, attempted twice to force him; but they had scarcely commenced their march when Arnold fell upon them with his division, and in those woods, lined with sharpshooters, it was only possible for them to reach the entrenchments. Arnold had his leg broken at the second affair; Lincoln, the other major-general, was wounded also. Four thousand men, who embarked at New York, had, it is true, ascended the Hudson. Whilst Vaughan was needlessly burning Esopus, Clinton had taken all the forts that defended the river. They were but little annoyed by Putnam, who, in the first breaking out of the troubles, had thrown aside his plow to bear to the army far more zeal than talent. But still that diversion was too weak; and by a note which a spy who had been taken swallowed, but which was recovered by an emetic, it was seen that Clinton was aware of his own weakness. Bur-

goyne, abandoned by the savages, regretting his best soldiers, and Frazer his best general, reduced to five thousand men, who were in want of provisions, wished to retreat; but it was then too late: his communications were no longer open; and it was at Saratoga, some miles in the rear of his army, that he signed the celebrated convention. A brilliant troop, covered with gold, filed out with Burgoyne: they encountered Gates and his officers, all clothed in plain gray cloth. After a frugal repast, the two generals beheld the conquered army filing out; and, as a member of parliament said, "*five thousand men crossed the rebel country to take up their winter quarters near Boston.*" Clinton then redescended to New York, and the militia returned to their domestic hearths. Gates' chief merit consisted in his skillful choice of a position; Burgoyne's misfortune was owing to the nature of the country, which was impracticable and almost a desert. If the enemies of the former criticized the terms of the convention, M. de Lafayette loudly proclaimed how glorious he thought it; but he blamed Gates afterwards for rendering himself independent of his general, and for retaining the troops which he ought to have sent him. To obtain them, it was necessary to dispatch Hamilton, a young man of great talents, whose counsels had justly acquired much credit.[19]

The forts of the Delaware had not yet yielded: that of Red-Bank, defended by four hundred men, was attacked, sword in hand, by sixteen hundred Hessians. The work having been reduced by Mauduit, a young Frenchman, the enemy engaged betwixt the old and new entrenchments. They were driven back with the loss of seven hundred men and Count Donop, their chief, whose last words were—"*I die the victim of my own ambition, and the avarice of my sovereign.*" That fort was commanded by an old and respected colonel, Greene, who, three years after, was massacred by the English, to whom he had surrendered, whilst, covering him with his own body, an old negro perished heroically by his side. Fort Mifflin, although attacked by land and water, did not defend itself less valiantly; the *Augusta*, an English ship of the line, had been already blown up; a frigate also perished; and Colonel

[19] The celebrated Alexander Hamilton, one of the authors of the *Federalist*.

Smith did not even think of surrendering: but the island being attacked from an unknown passage, the works were assaulted from the rear, and were obliged to be evacuated. Lord Cornwallis and five thousand men having fallen upon the Jerseys, it became also necessary to quit Red-Bank, which the Americans blew up before leaving it: General Greene, crossing the river at Trenton, opposed, with a precisely equal force, the detachment of Cornwallis.

Although M. de Lafayette's wound was not yet sufficiently closed for him to put on a boot, he accompanied Greene to Mount Holly; and detaching himself in order to reconnoiter, he found the enemy, November 25th, at Gloucester, opposite Philadelphia. The booty they had collected was crossing the river. To assure himself more fully on this point, M. de Lafayette advanced upon the strip of land called Sandy Point, and for this imprudence he would have paid dearly if those who had the power of killing him had not depended too much on those who had the power of taking him prisoner. After having succeeded in somewhat appeasing the terror of his guides, he found himself, about four o'clock, two miles from the English camp, before a post of four hundred Hessians with their cannon. Having only three hundred and fifty men, most of them militia, he suddenly attacked the enemy, who gave way before him. Lord Cornwallis came up with his grenadiers; but, supposing himself to be engaged with the corps of General Greene, he allowed himself to be driven back to the neighborhood of Gloucester, with a loss of about sixty men. Greene arrived in the night, but would not attack the enemy. Lord Cornwallis passed over the river, and the American detachment rejoined the army at its station at Whitemarsh, twelve miles from Philadelphia. It had occupied, since the last month, some excellent heights; the general's accurate glance had discerned the situation of the encampment through an almost impenetrable wood.

The slight success of Gloucester gratified the army, and especially the militia. The congress resolved, that "it would be extremely agreeable to them to see the Marquis de Lafayette at the head of a division." [20] He quitted, therefore, his situation of volunteer, and succeeded Stephen in the command

[20] Journal of Congress, 1st December, 1777.

of the Virginians. The junction of Cornwallis having been the work of some hours, and that of Greene requiring several marches, it is difficult to imagine why Howe gave him time to arrive, and only proceeded with his army on the 5th of December to Chestnut Hill, three miles from Whitemarsh. After having felt his way with the right wing, of which he stood in some awe, he threatened to attack the extreme left; and that wing, following his own movements, stationed itself on the declivity of the heights. Some shots were exchanged betwixt the English light horsemen and the American riflemen, very skillful carabineers, who inhabit the frontiers of the savage tribes. Not being able to attack that position, and not wishing to make the circuit of it, Howe returned, on the fourth day, to Philadelphia. In spite of the northern reënforcements, the Americans were reduced to nine thousand, and the advanced season diminished their numbers rapidly. The protection of the country had cost the army dear. The 15th of December they marched towards Swedes' Ford, where Lord Cornwallis was accidentally foraging on the other side of the river. M. de Lafayette, being upon duty, was examining a position, when his escort and the enemy fired upon each other. The uncertainty being mutual, Lord Cornwallis and General Washington suspended their march; the former having retired during the night, the army crossed over the Schuylkill, and entrenched itself in the station of Valley-Forge, twenty-two miles from Philadelphia. Having skillfully erected there, in a few days, a city of wooden huts, the army established itself in its melancholy winter quarters. A small corps was detached to Wilmington, and fortified itself, under the command of Brigadier-General Smallwood.

Notwithstanding the success in the north, the situation of the Americans had never been more critical than at the present moment. A paper money, without any certain foundation, and unmixed with any specie, was both counterfeited by the enemy and discredited by their partisans. They feared to establish taxes, and had still less the power of levying them. The people, who had risen against the taxation of England, were astonished at paying still heavier taxes now; and the government was without any power to enforce them. On the other side, New York and Philadelphia were overstocked with

gold and various merchandizes; the threatened penalty of death could not stop a communication that was but too easy. To refuse the payment of taxes, to depreciate the paper currency, and feed the enemy, was a certain method of attaining wealth; privations and misery were only experienced by good citizens. Each proclamation of the English was supported by their seductions, their riches, and the intrigues of the Tories. Whilst a numerous garrison lived sumptuously at New York, some hundreds of men, ill-clothed and ill-fed, wandered upon the shores of the Hudson.

The army of Philadelphia, freshly recruited from Europe, abundantly supplied with everything they could require, consisted of eighteen thousand men: that of Valley-Forge was successively reduced to five thousand men; and two marches on the fine Lancaster road, (on which road also was a chain of magazines,) by establishing the English in the rear of their right flank, would have rendered their position untenable; from which, however, they had no means of retiring. The unfortunate soldiers were in want of everything; they had neither coats, hats, shirts, nor shoes; their feet and legs froze till they became black, and it was often necessary to amputate them. From want of money, they could neither obtain provisions nor any means of transport; the colonels were often reduced to two rations, and sometimes even to one. The army frequently remained whole days without provisions, and the patient endurance of both soldiers and officers was a miracle which each moment served to renew. But the sight of their misery prevented new engagements: it was almost impossible to levy recruits; it was easy to desert into the interior of the country. The sacred fire of liberty was not extinguished, it is true, and the majority of the citizens detested British tyranny; but the triumph of the north, and the tranquillity of the south, had lulled to sleep two-thirds of the continent. The remaining part was harassed by two armies; and, throughout this revolution, the greatest difficulty was, that, in order to conceal misfortunes from the enemy, it was necessary to conceal them from the nation also; that by awakening the one, information was likewise given to the other; and that fatal blows would have been struck upon the weakest points before democratic tardiness could have been roused to

support them. It was from this cause that, during the whole war, the real force of the army was always kept a profound secret; even congress was not apprised of it, and the generals were often themselves deceived.

General Washington never placed unlimited confidence in any person, except in M. de Lafayette; because for him alone, perhaps, confidence sprung from warm affection. As the situation grew more critical, discipline became more necessary. In the course of his nocturnal rounds, in the midst of heavy snows, M. de Lafayette was obliged to break some negligent officers. He adopted in every respect the American dress, habits, and food. He wished to be more simple, frugal, and austere than the Americans themselves. Brought up in the lap of luxury, he suddenly changed his whole manner of living, and his constitution bent itself to privation as well as to fatigue. He always took the liberty of freely writing his ideas to congress; or, in imitation of the prudence of the general, he gave his opinion to some members of a corps or state assembly, that, being adopted by them, it might be brought forward in the deliberations of congress.

In addition to the difficulties which lasted during the whole of the war, the winter of Valley-Forge recalls others still more painful. At Yorktown, behind the Susquehanna, congress was divided into two factions, which, in spite of their distinction of south and east, did not the less occasion a separation between members of the same state. The deputies substituted their private intrigues for the wishes of the nation. Several impartial men had retired; several states had but one representative, and in some cases not even one. Party spirit was so strong, that three years afterwards congress still felt the effects of it. Any great event, however, would awaken their patriotism; and when Burgoyne declared that his treaty had been broken, means were found to stop the departure of his troops, which everything, even the few provisions for the transports, had foolishly betrayed. But all these divisions failed to produce the greatest of calamities—the loss of the only man capable of conducting the revolution.

Gates was at Yorktown, where he inspired respect by his manners, promises, and European acquirements. Amongst the deputies who united themselves to him, may be numbered

the Lees, Virginians, enemies of Washington, and the two Adams. Mifflin, quarter-master-general, aided him with his talents and brilliant eloquence. They required a name to bring forward in the plot, and they selected Conway, who fancied himself the chief of a party. To praise Gates, with a certain portion of the continent and the troops, was a pretext for speaking of themselves. The people attach themselves to prosperous generals, and the commander-in-chief had been unsuccessful. His own character inspired respect and affection; but Greene, Hamilton, Knox, his best friends, were sadly defamed.

The Tories had fomented these dissensions. The presidency of the war-office, which had been created for Gates, restricted the power of the general. This was not the only inconvenience; a committee from congress arrived at the camp, and the attack of Philadelphia was daringly proposed. The most shrewd people did not believe that Gates was the real object of this intrigue. Though a good officer, he had not the power to assert himself. He would have given place to the famous General Lee, then a prisoner of the English, whose first care would have been to have made over to them his friends and all America.

Attached to the General, and still more so to the cause, M. de Lafayette did not hesitate for a moment; and, in spite of the caresses of one party, he remained faithful to the other, whose ruin seemed then impending. He saw and corresponded frequently with the General, and often discussed with him his own private situation, and the effect that various meliorations in the army might produce. Having sent for his wife to the camp, the General preserved in his deportment the noble composure which belongs to a strong and virtuous mind. "I have not sought for this place," said he to M. de Lafayette; "if I am displeasing to the nation, I will retire; but until then I will oppose all intrigues."

(1778.) The 22nd of January, congress resolved that Canada should be entered, and the choice fell upon M. de Lafayette. The Generals Conway and Stark were placed under him. Hoping to intoxicate and govern so young a commander, the war-office, without consulting the commander-in-chief, wrote to him to go and await his further instructions at Albany.

But after having won over by his arguments the committee which congress had sent to the camp, M. de Lafayette hastened to Yorktown, and declared there "that he required circumstantial orders, a statement of the means to be employed, the certainty of not deceiving the Canadians, an augmentation of generals, and rank for several Frenchmen, fully impressed," he added, "with the various duties and advantages they derived from their name; but the first condition he demanded was, not to be made, like Gates, independent of General Washington." At Gates' own house he braved the whole party, and threw them into confusion by making them drink the health of their general.[21] In congress he was supported by President Laurens, and he obtained all that he demanded. His instructions from the war-office promised that 2,500 men should be assembled at Albany, and a large corps of militia at Coos; that he should have two millions in paper money, some hard specie, and all means supplied for crossing Lake Champlain upon the ice, whence, after having burnt the Engish flotilla, he was to proceed to Montreal, and act there as circumstances might require.

Repassing then, not without some danger, the Susquehanna, which was filled with floating masses of ice, M. de Lafayette set out for Albany, and, in spite of the obstacles offered by ice and snow, rapidly traversed an extent of four hundred miles. Whilst traveling thus on horseback, he became thoroughly acquainted with the simplicity and purity of the inhabitants, their patriarchal mode of life, and their republican ideas. Devoted to their household cares, the women are happy, and afford to their husbands the calmest and truest felicity. To unmarried women alone is love spoken of, and their modesty enhances the charm of their innocent coquetry. In the chance marriages which take place in Paris, the fidelity of the wife is often repugnant to the voice of nature and of reason, one might almost say to the principles of justice. In America, a girl marries her lover, and it would be like having

[21] After having thus declared himself, he wrote to congress that "he could only accept the command on condition of remaining subordinate to General Washington, of being but considered as an officer detached from him, and of addressing all his letters to him, of which those received by congress would be but duplicates." These requests, and all the others he made, were granted.

two lovers at the same time if she were to break that valid agreement; because both parties know equally how and in what manner they are bound to each other. In the bosom of their own families, the men occupy themselves with their private affairs, or assemble together to regulate those of the state. They talk politics over their glasses, and become animated by patriotism rather than strong liquor. Whilst the children shed tears at the name of Tory, the old men sent up prayers to Heaven that they might be permitted to see the end of that war. During his repeated and rapid journeys, M. de Lafayette, mixing with all classes of society, was not wholly useless to the good cause, to the interest of the French, and to the party of General Washington.

M. de Lafayette, on arriving at Albany, experienced some disappointments. Instead of 2,500 men, there were not 1,200. Stark's militia had not even received a summons. Clothes, provisions, magazines, sledges, all were insufficient for that glacial expedition. By making better preparations, and appointing the general earlier, success would probably have been secured. Several Canadians began to make a movement, and from that moment they testified great interest in M. de Lafayette; but two months were requisite to collect all that was necessary, and towards the middle of March the lakes begin to thaw. M. de Lafayette, general, at twenty years of age, of a small army, charged with an important and very difficult operation, authorized by the orders of congress, animated by the expectations now felt in America, and which, he knew, would ere long be felt likewise in Europe, had many motives for becoming adventurous; but, on the other hand, his resources were slender, the time allowed him was short, the enemy was in a good position, and Lieutenant-General Carleton was preparing for him another Saratoga. Forced to take a decisive step immediately, he wrote a calm letter to congress, and with a heavy sigh abandoned the enterprise. At the same period, congress, becoming a little less confident, dispatched to him some wavering counsels, which, arriving too late, only served to compromise the general and justify the government. But the prudence of M. de Lafayette was at length rewarded by the approbation of congress and of the nation; and, until the opening of the campaign, he continued

to command that department.[22] He found there that intrepid Arnold, who was still detained by his wound, and who since . . . ; he became intimately acquainted with Schuyler, the predecessor of Gates, in disgrace as well as Saint-Clair, but who continued useful to the cause from the superiority of his talents, his importance in that part of the country, and the confidence he enjoyed in New York, of which state he was a citizen.

If Canada did not herself send an offensive army, all the savages were paid and protected by the English party: the Hurons and Iroquois committed their devastations on that whole frontier. Some baubles or a barrel of rum were sufficient to make them seize the tomahawk; they then rushed upon villages, burnt houses, destroyed harvests, massacred all, without regard to age or sex, and received on their return the price of each bloody scalp they could exhibit. A young American girl, whom her lover, an English officer, was expecting, that their marriage might take place, was killed by the very savages he had sent to escort her. Two Americans were actually eaten up by the Senecas, and a colonel of the English army was a guest at that horrible repast. "It is thus," was often said to the savages, whilst drinking with them at the councils, "it is thus we must drink the blood of rebels." M. de Lafayette, conscious that he could not protect such an immense extent of frontier, prepared quarters in every direction, and announced the speedy arrival of troops in all the counties; and this stratagem stopped the depredations of the savages, who do not usually attack those places in which they expect to find much resistance. But he kept the Albany troops close together, satisfied them a little as to payment, provisioned the forts, which had been hitherto neg-

[22] He had the discretion to renounce an expedition which, undertaken without proper means, would have produced fatal effects upon the whole northern part of the United States. At Georgetown, the present residence of congress, some anxiety was experienced, because they feared that M. de Lafayette had trusted himself upon the lakes in the season of the year when the ice begins to melt. The counter orders that were sent him would have arrived too late; and when it became known that he had himself renounced the expedition, he received the thanks of congress and of the minister of war, General Gates, who, in spite of the line of conduct Lafayette had pursued during his quarrel with General Washington, had always expressed great respect and esteem for him. (Manuscript No. 1.)

lected, and arrested a plot of which the particulars have never been precisely known. He found in George Clinton, governor of the state of New York, a firm and an enlightened coöperator.

Soon after, Schuyler and Duane, who were charged with the management of the affairs of the savages, appointed a general assembly at Johnson's Town, upon the Mohawk river. Recalling to them their former attachment to the French, M. de Lafayette repaired thither in a sledge to show himself in person to those nations whom the English had endeavored to prejudice against him. Five hundred men, women, and children, covered with various colored paints and feathers, with their ears cut open, their noses ornamented with rings, and their half-naked bodies marked with different figures, were present at the councils. Their old men, whilst smoking, talked politics extremely well. Their object seemed to be to promote a balance of power; if the intoxication of rum, as that of ambition in Europe, had not often turned them aside from it. M. de Lafayette, adopted by them, received the name of *Kayewla,* which belonged formerly to one of their warriors; and under this name he is well known to all the savage tribes. Some louis which he distributed under the form of medals, and some stuffs from the state of New York, produced but little effect when compared to the presents they had received from England. A treaty was entered into, which some of them rigidly observed; and the course of the evil was at least arrested for the present. The Oneidas and Tuscaroras, the only real friends the Americans possessed, requested to have a fort; and M. de Lafayette left them M. de Gouvion, a French officer, whose talents and virtues rendered him of great value to the cause. Whenever savages were required at the army, whenever there was any dealings with these tribes, recourse was always had to the credit of M. de Lafayette, whose *necklaces* and *words* were equally respected.

On his return, he found that the form of a new oath had been established, which each civil and military officer was to take, according to his own religious belief. *An acknowledgment of the independence, liberty, and sovereignty of the United States; an eternal renunciation of George III., his successors, and heirs, and every King of England; a promise to*

defend the said states against the said George III.; this was the purport of the oath administered by him to the whole northern department.[23] At the approach of spring, M. de Lafayette was recalled to the south. The affairs of General Washington were already in a more flourishing condition. Several of the states recommended him to their deputies; and from only suspecting one of them of being unfavorable to him, the New York assembly wished to recall one of their delegates. Congress had been a little recruited, and they were thinking of recruiting the army. At Valley-Forge, M. de Lafayette found some difficulty, not from the substance, but merely from the form of the oath; but that difficulty was easily obviated. A short time after, Simeon Deane arrived with the treaty of commerce between France and the United States.

By quitting France in so public a manner, M. de Lafayette had served the cause of the revolution. One portion of society was anxious for his success, and the attention of the other had become, to say the least, somewhat occupied in the struggle. If a spirit of emulation made those connected with the court desirous of war, the rest of the nation supported the young rebel, and followed with interest all his movements; and it is well known that the rupture that ensued was truly a national one. Some circumstances relating to his departure having displeased the court of London, M. de Lafayette omitted nothing that could draw more closely together the nations whose union he so ardently desired.

The incredible prejudices of the Americans had been augmented by the conduct of the first Frenchmen who had joined them. These men gradually disappeared, and all those who remained were remarkable for talents, or at least for probity. They became the friends of M. de Lafayette, who sincerely sought out all the national prejudices of the Americans against his countrymen for the purpose of overcoming them. Love and respect for the name of Frenchman animated his letters and speeches, and he wished the affection that was granted to him individually to become completely national. On the

[23] It is singular that the oath of renunciation to Great Britain and her king, which every one in the continental service was obliged to take at that time, should have been administered in one half of the United States by a Frenchman of twenty years of age. (Manuscript No. 2.)

other side, when writing to Europe, he denied the reports made by discontented adventurers, by good officers who were piqued at not having been employed, and by those men who, serving themselves in the army, wished to be witty or amusing by the political contrasts they described in their letters. But, without giving a circumstantial account of what private influence achieved, it is certain that enthusiasm for the cause, and esteem for its defenders, had electrified all France, and that the affair of Saratoga decided the ministerial commotion. Bills of conciliation passed in the English house of parliament, and five commissioners were sent to offer far more than had been demanded until then.

No longer waiting to see *how things would turn out*, M. de Maurepas yielded to the public wish, and what his luminous mind had projected, the more unchanging disposition of M. de Vergennes put in execution. A treaty was generously entered into with Franklin, Deane, and Arthur Lee, and that treaty was announced with more confidence than had been for some time displayed. But the war was not sufficiently foreseen, or at least sufficient preparations were not made. The most singular fact is, that at the very period when the firm resistance of the court of France had guided the conduct of two courts, America had fallen herself into such a state of weakness, that she was on the very brink of ruin. The 2nd of May, the army made a bonfire, and M. de Lafayette, ornamented with a white scarf, proceeded to the spot, accompanied by all the French. Since the arrival of the conciliatory bills, he had never ceased writing against the commission, and against every commissioner. The advances of these men were ill-received by congress; and, foreseeing a French coöperation, the enemy began to think of quitting Philadelphia.

General Washington sent two thousand chosen men across the Schuylkill to collect intelligence. M. de Lafayette, their commander, repaired, the 18th of May, to Barren Hill, eleven miles from the two armies. On a good elevation, his right resting upon some rocks and the river, on his left some excellent stone houses and a small wood, his front sustained by five pieces of cannon, and with roads in his rear, such was the position of M. de Lafayette. An hundred dragoons whom he was expecting did not arrive in sufficient time; but he sta-

tioned six hundred militia on his left at Whitemarsh, and their general, Porter, made himself answerable for those roads. On the evening of the 19th, Howe, who had just been recalled, and Clinton, who replaced him, sent out a detachment of seven thousand men, with fourteen pieces of cannon, under General Grant. Passing behind the inundation, that corps proceeded on the road to Francfort, and, by a circuitous movement, fell into that of Whitemarsh, from which the militia had just thought proper to retire.

On the morning of the 20th, M. de Lafayette was conversing with a young lady, who, on pretense of seeing her relations, to oblige him had consented to go to Philadelphia, when he was informed that the red dragoons were at Whitemarsh. It was the uniform of those he was expecting; he had placed Porter there; he had promised to pay him a visit, and intended that very evening to carry thither his detachment. But, for greater security, he examined carefully into the truth of the report; and, ascertaining that a column was marching on the left, he changed his front, and covered it with the houses, the wood, and a small churchyard. Scarcely was that movement ended, when he found himself cut off by Grant on the Swedes' Ford road in his rear. It was in the presence of the troops that he first heard the cry that he was surrounded, and he was forced to smile at the unpleasant intelligence. Several officers, whom he had dispatched to Valley-Forge, declared that they had been unable to find a passage. Every moment was precious, and M. de Lafayette proceeded on the road of Matson Ford, to which the enemy was nearer than himself. General Poor commanded his advance guard; and to him he sent Gimat, his own confidential aide-de-camp. He placed himself as the rear guard, and marched on with rapidity, but without precipitation. Grant had possession of the heights, and M. de Lafayette's road lay immediately beneath them. His apparent composure deceived his adversary; and perceiving that he was reconnoitering him, he presented to him, from among the trees and behind curtains, false heads of columns.

The time that Grant occupied in reconnoitering, and discovering an imaginary ambuscade, M. de Lafayette employed in regaining the foreground; at length he passed by Grant's column. He managed to impose likewise on Grey's column,

which followed him; and when the third division, under Howe and Clinton, reached Barren Hill, the Americans had already passed over Matson Ford. Forming themselves on the opposite shore, they awaited the enemy, who dared not attack them. Advancing on the ground, Howe was astonished at finding only one red line: the generals quarreled; and although the commander-in-chief had invited some ladies to sup with M. de Lafayette, although the admiral, (Howe's brother,) knowing him to be surrounded, had prepared a frigate for him, the whole army, (of which half had made a march of forty miles,) returned, much fatigued, without having taken a single man. It was then that fifty savages, friends of the Americans, encountered fifty English dragoons; and the cries of war on one side, and the appearance of the cavalry on the other, surprised the parties so much that they both fled, with equal speed. The alarm had been likewise great at Valley-Forge; and the report of three pieces of cannon that were there fired appeared an additional mystery to Grant. The aim of the general being attained, the detachment returned to its quarters, and M. de Lafayette was well received by the general and army.

An exchange of prisoners had long been talked of, and the cruelty of the English rendered this measure more necessary. Cooped up in a vessel at New York, and breathing a most noxious atmosphere, the American prisoners suffered all that gross insolence could add to famine, dirt, disease, and complete neglect. Their food was, to say the least, unwholesome. The officers, often confounded with their soldiers, appealed to former capitulations and to the right of nations; but they were only answered by fresh outrages. When one victim sunk beneath such treatment, " 'Tis well," was said to the survivors; "there is one rebel less." Acts of retaliation had been but rarely practiced by the Americans; and the English, like other tyrants, mistook their mildness and generosity for timidity.

Five hundred Americans, in a half-dying state, had been carried to the sea-shore, where the greatest number of them soon expired, and the general very properly refused to reckon them in exchange for his own prisoners of war. Another obstacle to the cartel was the capture of Lee, who had been taken prisoner in 1776; the congress insisted on his liberation, and, after much debating on both sides, he was at length exchanged

for General Prescot. Lee, who had been formerly a colonel in the English service, a general in Poland, and a fellow-soldier of the Russians and Portuguese, was well acquainted with all countries, all services, and several languages. His features were plain, his turn of mind caustic, his feelings ambitious and avaricious, his temper uncomplying, and his whole appearance singular and unprepossessing. A temporary fit of generosity had induced him to quit the English service, and the Americans, at that period, listened to him as to an oracle. In his heart he detested the general, and felt a sincere affection for himself alone; but, in 1776, his advice had undoubtedly saved both the general and the army. He made many advances to M. de Lafayette, but the one was a violent Englishman, and the other an enthusiastic Frenchman, and their intimacy was often interrupted by their differences of opinion. Gates, whose great projects had been frustrated, was at that time commanding a corps at White Plains, upon the left side of the Hudson, opposite to the island of New York. Conway had retired from service, and the place of inspector, which had been created for him, was given to Steuben, an old Prussian, with moderate talents, but methodical habits, who organized the army and perfected their tactics. The congress received at that time some conciliatory epistles, and the sentiments their answers breathed, like all the other deliberations of that assembly, were nobly felt, and nobly expressed. Lord Carlisle was president of the commission, and Lord Howe, Sir Henry Clinton, Mr. Eden, and Governor Johnstone were its members. The last named person wrote to some friends, who published his letters.

On the 17th of June, Philadelphia was evacuated. The invalids, magazines, and heavy ammunition of the British were embarked with the general; the commissioners of conciliation alone remained behind. Passing over to Gloucester, the army marched, in two columns, each consisting of seven thousand men, commanded by Clinton and Knyphausen, towards New York. The army of the United States, which was of nearly equal force, directed itself from Valley-Forge to Coryell's Ferry, and from thence to King's Town, within a march of the enemy; it was thus left at the option of the Americans, either to follow on their track, or to repair to White Plains.

In a council held on this subject, Lee very eloquently endeavored to prove that it was necessary to erect a bridge of gold for the enemy; that while on the very point of forming an alliance with them, everything ought not to be placed at hazard; that the English army had never been so excellent and so well disciplined; he declared himself to be for White Plains: his speech influenced the opinion of Lord Stirling and of the brigadiers-general. M. de Lafayette, placed on the other side, spoke late, and asserted that it would be disgraceful for the chiefs, and humiliating for the troops, to allow the enemy to traverse the Jerseys tranquilly; that, without running any improper risk, the rear guard might be attacked; that it was necessary to follow the English, maneuver with prudence, take advantage of a temporary separation, and, in short, seize the most favorable opportunities and situations. This advice was approved by many of the council, and above all by M. du Portail, chief of the engineers, and a very distinguished officer. The majority were, however, in favor of Lee; but M. de Lafayette spoke again to the general on this subject in the evening, and was seconded by Hamilton, and by Greene, who had been lately named quarter-master in place of Mifflin.

Several of the general officers changed their opinion; and the troops having already begun their march, they were halted, in order to form a detachment. When united, there were 3,000 continentalists and 1,200 militia; the command fell to the share of Lee, but, by the express desire of the general, M. de Lafayette succeeded in obtaining it. Everything was going on extremely well, when Lee changed his mind, and chose to command the troops himself; having again yielded this point, he rechanged once more; and as the general wished him to adhere to his first decision—"It is my fortune and honor," said Lee, to M. de Lafayette, "that I place in your hands; you are too generous to cause the loss of both!" This tone succeeded better, and M. de Lafayette promised to ask for him the next day. The enemy, unfortunately, continued their march; M. de Lafayette was delayed by want of provisions; and it was not until the 26th, at a quarter to twelve at night, that he could ask for Lee, who was sent with a detachment of one thousand men to Englishtown, on the left side of the enemy. The first corps had advanced upon their

right; and M. de Lafayette, by Lee's especial order, joined him at midday, within reach of the enemy, from whom he fortunately succeeded in concealing this movement. The two columns of the English army had united together at Monmouth Courthouse, from whence they departed on the morning of the 28th.

Whilst following them, the Americans marched rapidly through the woods of Freehold; and at eight o'clock the enemy's rear-guard was still in the vicinity of the court-house. If Lee had continued the direction he was then taking, he would have placed himself in an excellent position, especially as the American army was advancing on the road to Freehold; but the head of his column quitted the wood, into which it was again forced to retreat by the enemy's cannon. Lee then addressing himself to M. de Lafayette, told him to cross the plain, and attack the left flank of the enemy; and whilst this maneuver, which exposed them to the fire of the English artillery, was executing, he sent him an order to fall back into the village in which he had placed the rest of the troops. From thence he drew back still farther, and, changing his attack into a retreat, he exposed himself to be driven back by Lord Cornwallis, and subsequently by the whole English army, to whom good space of time had been allowed to form themselves in proper order.

At the first retrograde movement, M. de Lafayette sent information to the general of what was passing, who, arriving speedily on the spot, found the troops retreating in confusion. "You know," said Lee, "that all this was against my advice." The general, sending Lee to the rear,[24] himself formed seven or eight hundred men, and stationed them, with some cannon, upon a chosen spot, and M. de Lafayette undertook to retard the enemy's march. The English dragoons made their first charge upon a small morass which sheltered

[24] The two battalions formed to arrest the enemy's march were placed by General Washington himself. When, after having expressed his own feelings of dissatisfaction, he wished to give himself time to form his army on the heights behind the passage, he left there Major-General Lafayette, Brigadier-General Knox, commanding the artillery, and some officers of his staff. The colonels were good officers, and the battalions conducted themselves perfectly well. When the army was ranged in order of battle, General Greene commanded the right of the first line, Lord Stirling the left, and Lafayette the second line."—Lafayette.

him: the infantry marched round to attack him on the other side, but he had sufficient time to retire; and the army had by this time placed itself upon a height, where he took the command of the second line. A cannonade was kept up on both sides during the whole day, and two attacks of the enemy were repulsed. A battery, placed on their left, obliged them to change their position, and, when they presented their flank, the general attacked them and forced them to retreat, until darkness interrupted all operations. The American troops continued to gain ground, and Clinton retired during the night, leaving behind him more than three hundred dead and many wounded. The heat was so intense that the soldiers fell dead without having received a single wound, and the field of battle soon became untenable.

During this affair, which ended so well, although begun so ill, General Washington appeared to arrest fortune by one glance, and his presence of mind, valor, and decision of character, were never displayed to greater advantage than at that moment.[25] Wayne distinguished himself; Greene and the brave Stirling led forward the first line in the ablest manner. From four o'clock in the morning until night M. de Lafayette was momentarily obliged to change his occupations. The general and he passed the night lying on the same mantle, talking over the conduct of Lee, who wrote the next morning a very improper letter, and was placed under arrest. He was afterwards suspended by a council of war, quitted the service, and was not regretted by the army. Clinton having retreated towards the hollows of Shrewsbury, the general contented himself with the success already gained, and marched towards White Plains; the second line, under M. de Lafayette, forming the right column. The 4th of July, being the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, was celebrated at Brunswick; and a few days after the army learnt that the Count d'Estaing was before New York.

Twelve French vessels, which sailed from Toulon, had been

[25] "General Washington was never greater in battle than in this action. His presence stopped the retreat; his arrangements secured the victory. His graceful bearing on horseback, his calm and dignified deportment, which still retained some trace of the displeasure he had experienced in the morning, were all calculated to excite the highest degree of enthusiasm."—Lafayette.

three months in reaching the Delaware: they arrived three days after the departure of the English fleet, and, following it to New York, M. d'Estaing anchored at Sandy Hook, outside the bar. He offered immense sums to be conveyed across that bar, but the pilots declared that the large vessels drew too much water, and the French finally agreed to attack Rhode Island, which the enemy then occupied with a force of 5,000 men, who had entrenched themselves; whilst the state militia, under the command of Sullivan, were stationed at Providence. M. Girard, a French minister, arrived on board that squadron; he had been long most anxiously expected by the Americans, and M. de Lafayette called his delay a proof of confidence. The last mark of attention with which the court honored M. de Lafayette, had been an order to arrest him in the West Indies; he was, in truth, out of favor in that quarter, and their displeasure had increased on receiving his letters, which were dictated less by the prudence of a philosopher than by the enthusiasm of a young lover of liberty: but although no letters were addressed to him, M. d'Estaing was not less kind and attentive in his conduct; and 2,000 continentalists having been dispatched from White Plains to Providence, M. de Lafayette, who had exerted himself to hasten their departure, conducted them rapidly along the sound, across a smiling country, covered with villages, in which the evident equality of the population distinctly proved the democracy of the government. From the apparent prosperity of each colony, it was easy to judge of the degree of freedom which its constitution might enjoy.

By forcing the passage between Rhode Island and Connecticut, M. d'Estaing might easily have carried off as prisoners 1,500 Hessians who were stationed on the latter island; but he yielded to Sullivan's entreaties, and waited until that general should be in readiness: but although the troops of M. de Lafayette had traversed 240 miles, he found on his arrival that no preparations were yet made. He repaired to the squadron, and was received with the greatest possible attention, especially by the general; and, as M. de Suffren was placed in front, he carried back to him an order from M. d'Estaing to attack three frigates, which, however, were burnt by their own crews.

The American army repaired, on the 8th of August, to Howland's Ferry, during the time that the squadron was forcing its way between the two islands. General Greene having joined the army, M. de Lafayette yielded to him the command of half his corps; each then possessed a wing, of 1,000 continentalists and 5,000 militia. M. de Lafayette's corps was to receive the addition of the two battalions of Foix and Hainaut, with some marines. The English, fearing to be intercepted, evacuated the forts on the right of the island during the night of the 8th, and Sullivan landed with his troops the next day. M. de Lafayette was expecting the French that afternoon, and the boats were already under way, when a squadron appeared in sight on the south of the island, at M. d'Estaing's former anchorage. Lord Howe, brave even to audacity, having watched the movements of the French admiral and his fleet, collected a greater number of ships, of which the sizes were however too unequal: his position, and the southern wind, would enable him, he thought, to throw succors into Newport, where General Pigot had concentrated his force; but the wind changed during the night, and the next day M. d'Estaing, within sight of both armies, passed gallantly through the fire of the two batteries, whilst the enemy, cutting their cables, fled, under heavy press of sail. After a chase of eight hours the two squadrons at length met, and Lord Howe would have paid dearly for his temerity, had not a violent storm arisen, which dispersed the ships. By a singular chance, several of Byron's vessels came up at the same time on their return from Portsmouth, having been separated at the Azores by a violent gale of wind. The *Languedoc,* the admiral's ship, deprived of its masts and rudder, and driven by the tempest to a distance from the other vessels, was attacked by the *Isis,* of fifty guns, and owed its safety only to the courage and firmness of M. d'Estaing. At length he succeeded in rallying his squadron, and, faithful to his engagements, reappeared before Rhode Island; but as he no longer possessed the superiority of force, he announced his intention of repairing to Boston, where the *Cesar* had taken shelter after a combat.

When the storm, which lasted three days, subsided, the American army drew near Newport. This town was defended

by two lines of redoubts and batteries, surrounded by a wooden palisade, the two concentrated fronts of which rested on the sea-shore, and were supported by a ravine that it was necessary to cross. The trench was opened, the heavy batteries established, and General Greene and M. de Lafayette were deputed to go on board the French admiral ship, to endeavor to obtain time, and propose either to make an immediate attack, or to station vessels in the Providence river. If M. de Lafayette had felt consternation upon hearing of the dispersion of the fleet, the conduct of the sailors during the combat, which he learnt with tears in his eyes, inspired him with the deepest grief. In the council, where the question was agitated, M. de Brugnon (although five minutes before he had maintained the contrary) gave his voice in favor of Boston, and his opinion was unanimously adopted. Before they separated, the admiral offered his two battalions to M. de Lafayette, and appeared to feel great pleasure in being thus enabled to secure him his rank in the French army; but these troops were useful on board, and were not necessary on the island, and M. de Lafayette would not expose them to danger for his own private interest.

At the departure of the vessels, there was but one unanimous feeling of regret and indignation. Their lost time, extinguished hopes, and embarrassed situation, all served to increase the irritation of the militia, and their discontent became contagious. The people of Boston already spoke of refusing the fleet admission into their port; the generals drew up a protestation, which M. de Lafayette refused to sign. Carried away by an impulse of passion, Sullivan inserted in an order "that our allies have abandoned us." His ill humor was encouraged by Hancock, a member of congress, formerly its president, and who then commanded the militia of Massachusetts stationed on the island. To him M. de Lafayette first declared his intentions, and then, calling upon Sullivan, he insisted upon the words used in the order of the morning being retracted in that of the evening. Some hours after, the general returned his visit, and, drawing him aside, a very warm altercation took place; but although totally indifferent to the peril of a duel, Sullivan was neither indifferent to the loss of the intimacy of M. de Lafayette, nor to the influence this

young Frenchman possessed at head-quarters, and over congress and the nation; and in the numerous letters which M. de Lafayette wrote on this occasion, he made ample use of his influence over those three important powers.

Dr. Cooper, a Presbyterian minister, was extremely useful at Boston; and Hancock himself ended by repairing thither to receive the squadron. Rather than yield to the public torrent, M. de Lafayette had risked his own popularity; and in the fear of being guided by private interest, he had gone to the extreme in the opposite line of conduct. He lived in complete retirement, in his own military quarter, and was never seen but at the trench or the council, in which latter place he would not allow the slightest observation to be made against the French squadron. As hopes were still entertained of obtaining assistance from the later, it was resolved to retreat to the north of the island; and M. de Lafayette was sent on an embassy to M. d'Estaing. After having traveled all night, he arrived at the moment when the general and his officers were entering Boston. A grand repast, given by the town, was followed by a conference between the council, the admiral, and himself, at which M. d'Estaing, while he clearly demonstrated the insufficiency of his naval force, offered to march himself with his troops. Every word was submitted to M. de Lafayette, and the admiral remarked this deference without appearing hurt by it. That same day, the 29th August, Sullivan retreated from his post; and although the discontent which the militia experienced had diminished the number of his troops, he conducted this movement, and the attack which it occasioned, with great ability.

The next morning, at the same time that M. de Lafayette was informed of the event, he learnt also that the two armies were in close contact at the north of the island, and that Clinton had arrived with a reënforcement. Traversing then eighty miles in less than eight hours, he repaired to Howland's Ferry, arriving there just as the army was re-crossing it. A corps of a thousand men had been left on the island, surrounded with divisions of the enemy: M. de Lafayette undertook the charge of them, and succeeded in withdrawing them without losing a single man.

When congress returned thanks to him for his conduct dur-

ing this retreat, they likewise expressed their gratitude for his journey to Boston, at the very period when he might so rationally have expected an engagement. Sullivan returned to Providence, and left M. de Lafayette in the command of the posts around the island: the post of Bristol, in which his principal corps was placed, was exposed to an attack by water; he announced this to General Washington, to whom, Sullivan said, he thought the same idea had also occurred. It was at this place he learnt the affair of Ouessant, which he expected to celebrate as an important victory; but the welfare of the squadron recalled him to Boston, where he felt he could be useful to his countrymen. The general dissatisfaction was soon appeased; and although M. de Saint Sauveur had been killed accidentally in a tumult, the French had nevertheless full cause to acknowledge the kindness and moderation of the Bostonians. During a walk which he took with the Count d'Estaing, M. de Lafayette pointed out to him the remains of the army of Burgoyne: two soldiers of militia, stationed at each wing, alone constituted its guard. Feeling that his presence was no longer necessary to the squadron, and believing that it was his duty to return to France, M. de Lafayette set out to rejoin the principal corps of the army at Philadelphia.

During that time, the commissioners had made many addresses and proclamations. By endeavoring to gain over one member, Johnstone had displeased the congress, who refused to treat with him. In a public letter, signed Carlisle, the French nation was taxed with *a perfidy too universally acknowledged to require any new proof.* With the effervescence of youth and patriotism, M. de Lafayette seized this opportunity of opposing the commission; and the first impulse of M. d'Estaing was to approve of his conduct. A haughty challenge was sent from head-quarters to Lord Carlisle: the answer was an ill-explained refusal; and the impetuosity of M. de Lafayette was attended with a good result, whilst the prudence of the president was ridiculed in every public paper.[26]

[26] The following was written by M. de Lafayette twenty years after the presumed date of the memoirs:—"Lord Carlisle refused,—and he was right. The challenge, however, excited some jokes against the commission and its president, which, whether well or ill founded, are always disadvantageous to those who become their objects." And again he wrote, "Lord Carlisle was right: but the challenge appearing

Soon afterwards, during M. de Lafayette's residence at Philadelphia, the commission received its death-blow; whilst he was breakfasting with the members of congress, the different measures proper to be pursued were frankly and cheerfully discussed. The correspondence which took place at that time is generally known; the congress remained ever noble, firm, and faithful to its allies: Secretary Thomson, in his last letter to Sir Henry Clinton, informs him, that *"the congress does not answer impertinent letters."* To conceal nothing from the people, all the proposals were invariably printed; but able writers were employed in pointing out the errors they contained. In that happy country, where each man understood and attended to public affairs, the newspapers became powerful instruments to aid the revolution. The same spirit was also breathed from the pulpit, for the Bible in many places favors republicanism. M. de Lafayette, having once reproached an Anglican minister with speaking only of heaven, went to hear him preach the following Sunday, and the words, *the execrable house of Hanover,* proved the docility of the minister.

M. de Lafayette addressed a polite letter to the French minister, and wrote also to the congress, that, "whilst he believed himself free, he had supported the cause under the American banner; that his country was now at war, and that his services were first due to her; that he hoped to return; and that he should always retain his zealous interest for the United States." The congress not only granted him an unlimited leave of absence, but added to it the most flattering expressions of gratitude. It was resolved that a sword, covered with emblems, should be presented to him, in the name of the United States, by their minister in France: they wrote to the king; and the *Alliance,* of thirty-six guns, their finest ship, was chosen to carry him back to Europe. M. de Lafayette would neither receive from them anything farther, nor allow them to ask any favor for him at the court of France. But the congress, when proposing a coöperation in Canada, expressed its wish of seeing the arrangement of the affair con-

the result of chivalric patriotism, party spirit took advantage of the circumstance, and the feeling which had inspired this irregular step was generally approved."

fided to him: this project was afterwards deferred from the general's not entertaining hopes of its ultimate success. But although old prejudices were much softened,—although the conduct of the admiral and the squadron had excited universal approbation,—the congress, the general, and, in short, every one, told M. de Lafayette that, in the whole circuit of the thirteen states, vessels only were required, and that the appearance of a French corps would alarm the nation. As M. de Lafayette was obliged to embark at Boston, he set out again on this journey of four hundred miles; he hoped, also, that he should be able to take leave of M. d'Estaing, who had offered to accompany him to the islands, and whose friendship and misfortunes affected him as deeply as his active genius and patriotic courage excited his admiration.

Heated by fatiguing journeys and overexertion, and still more by the grief he had experienced at Rhode Island; and having afterwards labored hard, drank freely, and passed several sleepless nights at Philadelphia, M. de Lafayette proceeded on horseback, in a high state of fever, and during a pelting autumnal rain. Fêtes were given in compliment to him throughout his journey, and he endeavored to strengthen himself with wine, tea, and rum: but at Fishkill, eight miles from head-quarters, he was obliged to yield to the violence of an inflammatory fever. He was soon reduced to the last extremity, and the report of his approaching death distressed the army, by whom he was called *the soldier's friend,* and the whole nation were unanimous in expressing their good wishes and regrets for *the marquis,* the name by which he was exclusively designated. From the first moment, Cockran, director of the hospitals, left all his other occupations to attend to him alone. General Washington came every day to inquire after his friend; but, fearing to agitate him, he only conversed with the physician, and returned home with tearful eyes, and a heart oppressed with grief.[27] Suffering acutely from a raging fever and violent head-ache, M. de Lafayette felt convinced that he was dying, but did not lose for a moment the clearness of his understanding: having taken meas-

[27] General Washington—who, when Lafayette was wounded at Brandywine, said to the surgeon, *"Take care of him as if he were my son, for I love him the same"*—expressed for him, during this illness, the most tender and paternal anxiety.—(Manuscript No. 1.)

ures to be apprised of the approach of death, he regretted that he could not hope again to see his country and the dearest objects of his affection. Far from foreseeing the happy fate that awaited him, he would willingly have exchanged his future chance of life, in spite of his one and twenty years, for the certainty of living but for three months, on the condition of again seeing his friends, and witnessing the happy termination of the American war. But to the assistance of medical art, and the assiduous care of Dr. Cockran, nature added the alarming though salutary remedy of an hemorrhage.

At the expiration of three months, M. de Lafayette's life was no longer in danger: he was at length allowed to see the general, and think of public affairs. By deciphering a letter from M. d'Estaing, he learnt that, in spite of twenty-one English vessels, the squadron had set out for la Martinique. After having spent some days together, and spoken of their past labors, present situations, and future projects, General Washington and he took a tender and painful leave of each other. At the same time that the enemies of this great man have accused him of insensibility, they have acknowledged his tenderness for M. de Lafayette; and how is it possible that he should not have been warmly cherished by his disciple, he who, uniting all that is good to all that is great, is even more sublime from his virtues than from his talents? Had he been a common soldier, he would have been the bravest in the ranks; had he been an obscure citizen, all his neighbors would have respected him. With a heart and mind equally correctly formed, he judged both of himself and circumstances with strict impartiality. Nature, whilst creating him expressly for that revolution, conferred an honor upon herself; and, to show her work to the greatest possible advantage, she constituted it in such a peculiar manner, that each distinct quality would have failed in producing the end required, had it not been sustained by all the others.

In spite of his extreme debility, M. de Lafayette, accompanied by his physician, repaired, on horseback, to Boston, where Madeira wine effectually restored his health. The crew of the *Alliance* was not complete, and the council offered to institute a press, but M. de Lafayette would not consent to this method of obtaining sailors, and it was at length resolved to

make up the required number by embarking some English deserters, together with some volunteers from among the prisoners. After he had written to Canada, and sent some necklaces to a few of the savage tribes, Brice and Nevil, his aides-de-camp, bore his farewell addresses to the congress, the general, and his friends. The inhabitants of Boston, who had given him so many proofs of their kindness and attention, renewed their marks of affection at his departure; and the *Alliance* sailed on the 11th of January. A winter voyage is always boisterous in that latitude; but on approaching the banks of Newfoundland, the frigate experienced a violent storm: her main-top mast torn away, injured by a heavy sea, filling with water, during one long dark night she was in imminent danger; but a still greater peril awaited her, two hundred leagues from the coast of France. His British Majesty, encouraging the mutiny of crews, had issued a somewhat immoral proclamation, promising them the value of every *rebel* vessel that they should bring into an English port; which exploit could only be performed by the massacre of the officers and those who opposed the mutiny. This proclamation gave rise to a plot which was formed by the English deserters and volunteers, who had most imprudently been admitted, in great numbers, on board the ship: not one American or Frenchman (for some French sailors had been found at Boston, after the departure of the squadron) took part in this conspiracy. The cry of *Sail!* was to be raised, and when the passengers and officers came on deck, four cannon, loaded with canister shot, prepared by the gunner's mate, were to blow them into atoms. An English sergeant had also contrived to get possession of some loaded arms. The hour first named was four in the morning, but was changed to four in the afternoon.

During that interim, the conspirators, deceived by the accent of an American who had lived a long time in Ireland, and traded on its coast, disclosed the plot to him, and offered him the command of the frigate: the worthy man pretended to accept it, and was only able to inform the captain and M. de Lafayette of the conspiracy one hour before the time fixed for its execution. They rushed, sword in hand, upon deck, followed by the other passengers and officers, called upon their

own sailors to assist them, and seized thirty-one of the culprits, whom they placed in irons. Many others were accused in the depositions, but it was judged expedient to appear to rely upon the rest of the crew, although real confidence was only placed in the French and Americans. Eight days afterwards, the *Alliance* entered safely the port of Brest, February, 1779.

When I saw the port of Brest receive and salute the banner which floated on my frigate, I recalled to mind the state of my country and of America, and my peculiar situation when I quitted France. The conspirators were merely exchanged as English prisoners, and I only thought of rejoining my family and friends, of whom I had received no intelligence during the last eight months. When I repaired to a court which had hitherto only granted me *lettres de cachet*, M. de Poix made me acquainted with all the ministers. I was interrogated, complimented, and exiled, but to the good city of Paris; and the residence of the Hotel de Noailles was selected, instead of according me the horrors of the Bastille, which had been at first proposed. Some days afterwards, I wrote to the king to acknowledge an error of which the termination had been so fortunate: he permitted me to receive a gentle reprimand in person; and, when my liberty was restored to me, I was advised to avoid those places in which the public might consecrate my disobedience by its approbation.

On my arrival, I had the honor of being consulted by all the ministers, and, what was far better, embraced by all the ladies. Those embraces lasted but one day; but I retained for a greater length of time the confidence of the cabinet, and I enjoyed both favor at the court of Versailles, and popularity at Paris. I was the theme of conversation in every circle, even after the queen's kind exertions had obtained for me the regiment of the king's dragoons. Times are widely changed; but I have retained all that I most valued—popular favor and the affection of those I love.

Amidst the various tumultuous scenes that occupied my mind, I did not forget our revolution, of which the ultimate success still appeared uncertain. Accustomed to see great interests supported by slender means, I often said to myself that the expense of one *fête* would have organized the army

of the United States; and to clothe that army I would willingly, according to the expression of M. de Maurepas, have unfurnished the palace of Versailles. In the meantime, the principal object of the quarrel, American independence, and the advantage our government and reputation would derive from seizing the first favorable opportunity, did not appear to me sufficiently promoted by those immense preparations for trifling conquests, and those projects conceived in the expectation of peace; for no person seriously believed in war, not even when it was declared, after the *hundredth injury* had induced Spain to enter into those coöperations which finally terminated in nothing more than noisy exercises.

SECOND VOYAGE TO AMERICA AND CAMPAIGNS OF 1780 AND 1781

Lafayette, who quitted France as a rebel and fugitive, returned there triumphant and in favor. He was scarcely punished by a week's arrest for his disobedience to the King, and that was only after he had had a conversation with the first minister, Maurepas. Lafayette found himself the tie between the United States and France; he enjoyed the confidence of both countries and both governments. His favor at court and in society was employed in serving the cause of the Americans, in destroying the false impressions that were endeavored to be raised against them, and in obtaining for them succors of every kind. He experienced, however, many difficulties; the friends of the Austrian alliance saw, with displeasure, that that war would cause the refusal of the forty thousand auxiliaries stipulated by the treaty of Vienna; the French ministry already feared the too great aggrandisement of the United States, and decidedly refused the conquest of Canada, on pretense that before a fourteenth state was added to those that had already declared themselves independent, it was necessary first to deliver the thirteen from the yoke of the English. M. Neckar feared everything that could either increase the expense of the war or prolong it. Maurepas himself, who had been reluctantly led into it, was completely weary of it; he hoped to obtain peace by making an attempt on England. Lafayette, taking advantage of this idea, had organized an expedition, in which the celebrated Paul Jones was to command the marines, and of which the object was to

transport a body of troops, bearing the American banner, upon the coast of England, and levy contributions to supply the Americans with the money that could not be drawn from the treasury of France. Liverpool and some other towns would have been justly punished for the part they had taken in the vexations exercised against the colonies, to whom they were indebted for their prosperity; but the economy and timidity of the French ministers made this undertaking fail.

Lafayette, despairing of the success of the Canada expedition, took a step that was undoubtedly a bold one, but which was quite justified by the issue. He had been enjoined not to ask for French auxiliary troops for the United States, because the popular feeling of jealousy against foreigners, and especially against Frenchmen, not only rendered the congress itself averse to this project, but made them believe it would excite general anxiety and discontent. Lafayette foresaw that before the succor could be ready, the United States would feel its necessity, and that it might arrive, as did actually occur, in a decisive moment for the safety of the cause. He took, therefore, upon himself, not being able to obtain troops for Canada, to solicit, in the name of the congress, what he had been positively forbidden to ask, a succor of auxiliary troops sent to a port of the United States, and he made choice of that of Rhode Island which, having been evacuated by the English, and being in an Island suitable for defense, was more likely than any other to obviate all kinds of difficulties. He obtained the promise of six thousand men, but four thousand only were afterwards sent, under Count Rochambeau: however trifling that number might appear, Lafayette knew that, by employing young officers of the court, and drawing the attention of the French upon that little corps, the ministers would sooner or later be obliged to render it of use by obtaining a decided naval superiority upon the American coast, which was Lafayette's principal object, and which it was very difficult to obtain, owing to other plans of operation; in fact, that naval superiority was never established until 1781, and then lasted but for a few weeks: events have since proved how right Lafayette was to speak every day of its necessity.

The corps which had been granted were not in readiness to sail until the beginning of the year 1780. Lafayette in the

meantime was employed in the staff of the army which was preparing for a descent on England, under the orders of the Marshal de Vaux. It was then that Dr. Franklin's grandson presented him officially with the sword that congress had decreed to him. Upon that sword were represented Monmouth, Barren Hill, Gloucester, and Rhode Island; America, delivered from her chains, was offering a branch of laurel to a youthful warrior; the same warrior was represented inflicting a mortal wound upon the British lion. Franklin had placed in another part an ingenious device for America; it was a crescent, with these words: *Crescam ut prosim;* on the other side was the device, *Cur non?* which the youth himself had adopted when he first set out for America.

Lafayette, at the end of the campaign, renewed his efforts to obtain the fulfillment of the hopes which had been given him; he succeeded in gaining pecuniary succors, which were placed at the disposal of General Washington, for it was upon that general that reposed the whole confidence of the government, and the hopes of the French nation. Clothing for the army had been promised also, but that remained behind with the two thousand men which were to have completed the corps of Rochambeau; and Admiral Ternay, instead of bringing, as he ought to have done, a stronger naval force than the enemy had brought, set sail for Rhode Island with seven vessels. This expedition was kept very secret;[1] Lafayette had preceded it on board the French frigate the *Hermione;* he arrived at Boston before the Americans and English had the least knowledge of that auxiliary reënforcement.

(1780.) The arrival of Lafayette at Boston produced the liveliest sensation, which was entirely owing to his own popularity, for no one yet knew what he had obtained for the United States. Every person ran to the shore; he was received

[1] It was settled that that corps of six thousand men, commanded by Lieutenant-General Rochambeau, was to be completely under the orders of the American commander-in-chief, and was only to form a division of his army. The order of service was regulated in such a manner that the French were only to be looked upon as auxiliaries, keeping the left of the American troops, and the command belonging, when there was equality of rank and age, to the American officers. In a word, the advantages to be derived by the government, the general, and the American soldiers, were stipulated beforehand in such a manner as to prevent all future discussions.—Lafayette.

with the loudest acclamations, and carried in triumph to the house of Governor Hancock, from whence he set out for headquarters. Washington learnt, with great emotion, of the arrival of his young friend. It was observed that on receiving the dispatch which announced to him this event, his eyes filled with tears of joy, and those who are acquainted with the disposition of Washington, will consider this as a certain proof of a truly paternal love. Lafayette was welcomed with the greatest joy by the army; he was beloved both by officers and soldiers, and felt the sincerest affection for them in return. After the first pleasure of their meeting was over, General Washington and he retired into a private room to talk over the present state of affairs. The situation of the army was a very bad one; it was in want of money, and it was become almost impossible to raise recruits; in short, some event was necessary to restore the energy of the different states, and give the army an opportunity of displaying its vigor.

It was then that Lafayette announced to the commander-in-chief what had been done, and the succors which might soon be expected to arrive. General Washington felt the importance of this good news, and considered it as deciding the successful issue of their affairs. All the necessary preparations were made: the secret was well kept, although steps were obliged to be taken for the arrival of the troops, who landed safely at Rhode Island, and who, in spite of their long inaction, formed a necessary and powerful force to oppose the English army.

During the campaign of 1780, the French corps remained at Rhode Island. After the defeat of Gates, Greene went to command in Carolina; Arnold was placed at West Point; the principal army, under the immediate orders of Washington, had for its front guard the light infantry of Lafayette, to which was joined the corps of the excellent partisan, Colonel Lee. This is the proper time to speak of that light infantry. The American troops had no grenadiers; their *chasseurs,* or riflemen, formed a distinct regiment, under the orders of the colonel, since Brigadier-General Morgan, and had been taken, not from different corps, but from parts of the country on the frontiers of the savage tribes, and from amongst men whose mode of life, and skill in firing their long carbines,

rendered them peculiarly useful in that service. But the regiments of the line supplied some chosen men, whose officers were also all picked men, and who formed a select band of about two thousand, under the orders of Lafayette. The mutual attachment of that corps and its head had become even a proverb in America. As a traveler brings from distant countries presents to his family and friends, he had brought from France the value of a large sum of money in ornaments for the soldiers, swords for the officers and under officers, and banners [2] for the battalions. This troop of chosen men, well exercised and disciplined, although badly clothed, were easily recognized by their red and black plumes, and had an excellent and a very pleasing appearance. But, except the few things which M. de Lafayette himself supplied, none of the things France had promised to send arrived: the money she lent proved, however, of essential service to the army.

During that year, a conference took place at Hartford, in Connecticut, between the French generals and General Washington, accompanied by General Lafayette and General Knox; they resolved to send the American Colonel Laurens, charged to solicit new succors, and above all, a superiority of force in the navy. On their return from this conference, the conspiracy of Arnold was discovered. General Washington would still have found that general in his quarters, if chance, or rather the desire of showing Lafayette the fort of West Point, constructed during his absence, had not induced him to repair thither before proceeding to Robinson's house, in which General Arnold then resided.

Historians have rendered a detailed account of the treachery of Arnold. When, at his own request, the command of West Point was confided to him, he urged General Washington to inform him what means of information he possessed at New York. He made the same request to Lafayette, who accidentally had several upon his own account, and to the other officers who commanded near the enemy's lines. All these generals fortunately considered themselves bound by the

[2] Upon one of these banners a cannon was painted, with this device: *Ultima ratio,* suppressing the word *regum,* which is used in Europe; upon another, a crown of laurel united to a civic crown, with the device —*No other.* And thus with the other emblems.—Note by M. de Lafayette.

promise of secrecy they had made, especially as several of the correspondents acted from a feeling of patriotism only. If Arnold had succeeded in discovering them, those unfortunate persons would have been ruined, and all means of communication cut off.

Arnold was very near receiving the letter of Lieutenant-Colonel Jameson in the presence of the commander-in-chief: he had turned aside, with Lafayette and Knox, to look at a redoubt; Hamilton and Mac-Henry, lieutenant-colonels, the one aide-de-camp to Washington, the other to Lafayette, had gone on before to request Mrs. Arnold not to wait breakfast for them. They were still there, and Arnold with them, when he received the note: he turned pale, retired to his own room, and sent for his wife, who fainted. In that state he left her, without any one perceiving it: he did not return into the drawing room, but got upon his aide-de-camp's horse, which was ready saddled at the door, and desiring him to inform the general that he would wait for him at West Point, hurried to the bank of the river, got into his canoe, and was rowed to the *Vulture*. The general, when he learnt on his arrival that Arnold was at West Point, fancied that he had gone to prepare for his reception there, and without entering into the house, stepped into a boat with the two generals who accompanied him. When they arrived at the opposite shore, they were astonished at finding they were not expected: the mystery was only explained on their return, because the dispatches of Lieutenant-Colonel Jameson had arrived in the interim.

An historian has spoken of the generosity with which Mrs. Arnold was treated. It is, in truth, highly honorable to the American character that, during the first effervescence of indignation against her husband, she was able to go to Philadelphia, take her effects, and proceed with a flag of truce to New York, without meeting with the slightest insult. The same historian (Mr. Marshall) might have added that, the very evening of Arnold's evasion, the general, having received from him a very insolent letter, dated on board the *Vulture*, ordered one of his aides-de-camp to tell Mrs. Arnold, who was in an agony of terror, that he had done everything he could to seize her husband, but that, not having been able to

do so, he felt pleasure in informing her that her husband was safe.[3]

It is impossible to express too much respect or too deep regret for Major André. The fourteen general officers who had the painful task of pronouncing his sentence, the commander-in-chief, and the whole American army, were filled with sentiments of admiration and compassion for him. The conduct of the English in a preceding circumstance had been far from being similar. Captain Hale, of Connecticut, a distinguished young man, beloved by his family and friends, had been taken on Long Island, under circumstances of the same kind as those that occasioned the death of Major André; but, instead of being treated with the like respect, to which Major André himself bore testimony, Captain Hale was insulted to the last moment of his life. "This is a fine death for a soldier!" said one of the English officers who were surrounding the cart of execution. "Sir," replied Hale, lifting up his cap, "there is no death which would not be rendered noble in such a glorious cause." He calmly replaced his cap, and

[3] General Arnold is the only American officer who ever thought of making use of his command to increase his fortune. The disinterestedness of those soldiers, during a period of revolution, which facilitates abuses, forms a singular contrast with the reproach of avidity that other governments, who have not shown the same moderation themselves, have thought proper to make against the citizens of the United States. The generals and American officers have almost all of them fought at their own expense; the affairs of many of them have been ruined by their absence. Those who had professions lost the power of exercising them. It has been proved, by accounts exacted in France during times of terror and proscription, that Lafayette had spent in the service of the American revolution, independent of his income, more than seven hundred thousand francs of his capital. The conduct of Washington was even more simple, and, according to our opinion, more praiseworthy: he would neither accept the profit of emolument, nor the pride of sacrifice; he was paid for all necessary expenses, and, without increasing his fortune, only lessened it, from the injury it unavoidably received from his absence. Whilst all the American officers conducted themselves with the most patriotic disinterestedness, and all the pretensions of the army were satisfied with the compensation of seven years' pay, we can only quote the single example of the traitor Arnold, who endeavored, from circumstances the slightest, to draw pecuniary advantage. Some grants of lands have been made by the southern states to Generals Greene and Wayne, and Colonel Washington, but only since the revolution. The shares of the Potomac, given also since the revolution to General Washington, were left by him in his will for the foundation of a college: in a word, we may affirm, that delicacy and disinterestedness have been universal in the American army.—Note of M. de Lafayette.

the fatal cart moving on, he died with the most perfect composure.

During the winter, there was a revolt in the Pennsylvanian line. Lafayette was at Philadelphia; the congress, and the executive power of the state, knowing his influence over the troops, induced him to proceed thither with General Saint-Clair. They were received by the troops with marked respect, and they listened to their complaints, which were but too well grounded. General Wayne was in the midst of them, and had undertaken a negotiation in concert with the state of Pennsylvania. Lafayette had only, therefore, to repair to headquarters. The discontent of the Pennsylvanians was appeased by the measures of conciliation which had been already begun; but the same kind of revolt in a Jersey brigade was suppressed with more vigor by the general-in-chief, who, setting out with some battalions of Lafayette's light infantry, brought the mutineers to reason, and the generals, no longer restrained by the interference of the civil authority, reëstablished immediately that military discipline which was on the point of being lost.[4]

(1781.) General Arnold was at Portsmouth, in Virginia; Washington formed the project of combining with the French to attack him, and take the garrison. Lafayette set out from the headquarters with twelve hundred of the light infantry; he pretended to make an attack on Staten Island, and marching rapidly by Philadelphia to Head-of-Elk, he embarked with his men in some small boats, and arrived safely at Annapolis.

[4] The writings of that period give an account of the revolt of the soldiers of Pennsylvania; the complaints of most of them were well founded. When General Saint-Clair, Lafayette, and Laurens, repairing from Philadelphia to headquarters, stopped at Princetown, as they had been desired to do by the council of state of Pennsylvania, they found a negotiation begun by General Wayne, and Colonels Stewart and Butler, who were all three much beloved by the Pennsylvanian soldiers; committees arrived from the congress and state, to arrange the affair, not in a military, but in a civil manner: they remained but a few hours at Princetown, and the business was soon settled in the same manner in which it was commenced. But when the soldiers of the Jersey line wished to imitate the revolt of the Pennsylvanians, General Washington stifled it in its birth by vigorous measures. But it should be added that the sufferings and disappointments of that brave and virtuous army were sufficient to weary the patience of any human being: the conduct of the continental troops, during the revolution, has been, in truth, most admirable.

He set out from thence in a canoe, with some officers, and, in spite of the English frigates that were stationed in the bay, he repaired to Williamsburg, to assemble the militia, whilst his detachment was still waiting for the escort which the French were to send him. Lafayette had already blockaded Portsmouth, and driven back the enemy's pickets, when the issue of the combat between Admiral Arbuthnot and M. Destouches, the commander of the French squadron, left the English complete masters of the Chesapeake. Lafayette could only then return to Annapolis, to re-conduct his detachment to the camp. He found himself blockaded by small English frigates, which were much too considerable in point of force for his boats; but having placed cannon on some merchant ships, and embarked troops in them, he, by that maneuver, made the English frigates retreat, and taking advantage of a favorable wind, he reached with his men the Head-of-Elk, where he received some very important dispatches from General Washington. The enemy's plan of campaign was just at that time become known: Virginia was to be its object. General Phillips had left New York with a corps of troops to reënforce Arnold. The general wrote to Lafayette to go to the succor of Virginia. The task was not an easy one; the men whom he commanded had engaged themselves for a short expedition: they belonged to the northern states, which still retained strong prejudices as to the unhealthiness of the southern states; they had neither shirts nor shoes. Some Baltimore merchants lent Lafayette, on his bill, two thousand guineas, which sufficed to buy some linen. The ladies of Baltimore, whom he met with at a ball given in his honor when he passed through the town, undertook to make the shirts themselves. The young men of the same city formed themselves into a company of volunteer dragoons. His corps were beginning to desert.

Lafayette issued an order, declaring that he was setting out for a difficult and dangerous expedition; that he hoped that the soldiers would not abandon him, but that whoever wished to go away might do so instantly; and he sent away two soldiers who had just been punished for some serious offenses. From that hour all desertions ceased, and not one man would leave him: this feeling was so strong, that an under officer,

who was prevented by a diseased leg from following the detachment, hired, at his own expense, a cart, rather than separate from it. This anecdote is honorable to the American troops, and deserves to become publicly known.

Lafayette had conceived that the capital of Virginia would be the principal object of the enemy's attack. Richmond was filled with magazines; its pillage would have proved fatal to the cause. Lafayette marched thither with such rapidity, that when General Phillips, arriving before Richmond, learnt that Lafayette had arrived there the night before, he would not believe it. Having ascertained, however, the truth of the report, he dared not attack the heights of Richmond. Lafayette had a convoy to send to the southern states; he reconnoitered Petersburg carefully. This threatened attack assembled the English, and whilst the removing of cannon, and other preparations for an assault, amused them, the convoy was sent off rapidly with the munition and clothes which General Greene required. After the death of General Phillips, who died that same day, Arnold wrote, by a flag of truce, to Lafayette, who refused to receive his letter. He sent for an English officer, and, with many expressions of respect for the British army, told him that he could not consent to hold any correspondence with its present general. This refusal gave great pleasure to General Washington and the public, and placed Arnold in an awkward situation with his own army.

Lord Cornwallis, on entering Virginia by Carolina, got rid of all his equipage, and did the same also respecting the heavy baggage of the army under his orders. Lafayette placed himself under the same regimen, and, during the whole of that campaign, the two armies slept without any shelter, and only carried absolute necessaries with them. Upon that active and decisive conflict the issue of the war was to depend; for if the English, who bore all the force of the campaign on that point, became masters of Virginia, not only the army of Lafayette, but also that of Greene, who drew from thence all his resources,—and not only Virginia, but all the states south of the Chesapeake, would inevitably be lost. Thus the letters of the commander-in-chief, whilst telling Lafayette that he did not deceive himself as to the difficulties of the undertaking, merely requested him to

prolong as much as possible the defense of the state. The result was far more successful than any person had dared to hope, at a period when all eyes and all thoughts were directed towards that one decisive point.

The military scene in Virginia was soon to become more interesting. General Greene had marched to the right, to attack the posts of South Carolina, whilst Lord Cornwallis was in North Carolina. Cornwallis allowed him to depart, and, marching also to the right, burnt his own equipage and tents, to be enabled to remove more easily; he then advanced rapidly towards Petersburg, and made Virginia the principal seat of war. General Washington wrote to Lafayette that he could send him no other reënforcement than eight hundred of the mutinous Pennsylvanians, who had been formed again into a corps on the side of Lancaster. Lord Cornwallis had obtained, and generally by the aid of negroes, the best horses in Virginia. His Tarleton front guard, mounted on race horses, stopped, like birds of prey, all they met with. The active corps of Cornwallis was composed of more than four thousand men, of which eight hundred were supplied with horses. Their command was divided in the following manner: General Rochambeau remained at Rhode Island with his French corps; Washington commanded in person the American troops before New York; he summoned, some time after, the corps of Rochambeau to join him. That French lieutenant-general was under his orders the same as the American major-generals, for when Lafayette asked for the succor of troops, he took care to stipulate, in the most positive manner, that it was to be placed entirely under Washington's orders. The Americans were to have the right side; the American officer, when rank and age were equal, was to command the French officer. Lafayette had wished to give the rising republic all the advantages and all the consequence of the greatest and longest established powers.

Washington had sent, the preceding year, General Greene to command in the southern states; Virginia was nominally comprised in that command, and had not yet become the theater of war, but the distance between the operations of Carolina and those of Virginia was so great, and the communications were so difficult, that it was impossible for Greene to direct

what was passing in Virginia. Lafayette took, therefore, the chief command, corresponding in a direct manner with General Washington, and occasionally with the congress. But he wished that Greene should retain his title of supremacy, and he only sent to the headquarters copies of General Greene's letters, who was his intimate friend, in the same way that both he and Greene had always been on the most intimate footing with General Washington. During the whole of this campaign the most perfect harmony always subsisted between the generals, and contributed much to the success of the enterprise.

Lafayette, after having saved the magazines of Richmond, hastened to have them evacuated; he had taken his station at Osborn, and wrote to General Washington that he would remain there, as long as his weakest point, which was the left, should not be threatened with an attack. Lord Cornwallis did not fail soon to perceive the weakness of that point, and Lafayette retreated with his little corps, who, including recruits and the militia, did not exceed two thousand five hundred men. The richest young men of Virginia and Maryland had come to join him as volunteer dragoons, and from their intelligence, as well as from the superiority of their horses, they had been of essential service to him. The Americans retreated in such a manner that the front guard of the enemy arrived on the spot just as they had quitted it, and, without running any risk themselves, they retarded as much as possible its progress. Wayne was advancing with the reënforcement of Pennsylvanians. Lafayette made all his calculations so as to be able to effect a junction with that corps, without being prevented from covering the military magazines of the southern states, which were at the foot of the mountains on the height of Fluvana. But the Pennsylvanians had delayed their movements, and Lafayette was thus obliged to make a choice. He went to rejoin his reënforcement at Raccoon-Ford, and hastened, by forced marches, to come into contact with Lord Cornwallis, who had had time to make one detachment at Charlottesville, and another at the James River Fork. The first had dispersed the Virginian assembly; the second had done no material injury; but the principal blow was to be struck: Lord Cornwallis was established in a good position, within one

march of the magazines, when Lafayette arrived close to him on a road leading towards those magazines. It was necessary for him to pass before the English army, presenting them his flank, and exposing himself to a certain defeat: he fortunately found out a shorter road which had remained for a long time undiscovered, which he repaired during the night; and the next day, to the great surprise of the English general, he was established in an impregnable station, between the English and the magazines, whose loss must have occasioned that of the whole southern army, of whom they were the sole resource; for there was a road behind the mountains that the English never intercepted, and by which the wants of General Greene's army were supplied.

Lord Cornwallis, when he commenced the pursuit of Lafayette, had written a letter, which was intercepted, in which he made use of this expression: *The boy cannot escape me.* He flattered himself with terminating, by that one blow, the war in the whole southern part of the United States, for it would have been easy for him afterwards to take possession of Baltimore, and march towards Philadelphia. He beheld in this manner the failure of the principal part of his plan, and retreated towards Richmond, whilst Lafayette, who had been joined in his new station by a corps of riflemen, as well as by some militia, received notice beforehand to proceed forward on a certain day, and followed, step by step, the English general, without, however, risking an engagement with a force so superior to his own. His corps gradually increased. Lord Cornwallis thought proper to evacuate Richmond; Lafayette followed him, and ordered Colonel Butler to attack his rear guard near Williamsburg. Some maneuver took place on that side, of which the principal object on Lafayette's part was, to convince Lord Cornwallis that his force was more considerable than it was in reality. The English evacuated Williamsburg, and passed over James River to James Island. A warm action took place between the English army and the advance guard, whom Lafayette had ordered to the attack whilst they were crossing the river. Lord Cornwallis had stationed the first troops on the other side, to give the appearance as if the greatest number of the troops had already passed over the river. Although every person was unanimous in asserting

that this was the case, Lafayette himself suspected the deception, and quitted his detachment to make observations upon a tongue of land, from whence he could more easily view the passage of the enemy. During that time, a piece of cannon, exposed, doubtless, intentionally, tempted General Wayne, a brave and very enterprising officer.

Lafayette found, on his return, the advance guard engaged in action with a very superior force; he withdrew it, however (after a short but extremely warm conflict), in good order, and without receiving a check. The report was spread that he had had a horse killed under him, but it was merely the one that was led by his side.[5] The English army pursued its route to Portsmouth; it then returned by water to take its station at Yorktown and Gloucester, upon the York River. A garrison still remained at Portsmouth. Lafayette made some demonstrations of attack, and that garrison united itself to the body of the army at Yorktown.

Lafayette was extremely desirous that the English army should unite at that very spot. Such had been the aim of all his movements, ever since a slight increase of force had permitted him to think of any other thing than of retiring without being destroyed and of saving the magazines. He knew that a French fleet was to arrive from the islands upon the American coast. His principal object had been to force Lord Cornwallis to withdraw towards the sea-shore, and then entangle him in such a manner in the rivers, that there should

[5] Mr. Marshall relates the affair of Jamestown. There were no militia present, except the riflemen, who were placed in advance in the wood. They threw down successively three commandants of the advance post, placed there by Cornwallis, that what was passing behind might not be seen. This obstinacy in covering the position excited the suspicion of Lafayette, in spite of the unanimous opinion that a rear guard was alone remaining there. As soon as he saw, from the projecting tongue of land, that those who had crossed over were placed in such a manner as to appear numerous, he returned with all possible haste; but General Wayne had yielded to the temptation. He fortunately perceived his error, and being a good and brave officer, came forward with much gallantry; fortunately, also, Lafayette had only placed the Pennsylvanians in advance, and had left the light infantry in a situation to offer them some assistance. The first half of his continental troops retired upon the other half, and the whole were placed in such a manner that Lord Cornwallis feared an ambuscade, and the more so, observes Mr. Marshall, as he had always been deceived as to the real force of Lafayette's army.—Lafayette.

remain no possibility of a retreat. The English, on the contrary, fancied themselves in a very good position, as they were possessors of a sea-port by which they could receive succors from New York, and communicate with the different parts of the coast. An accidental, but a very fortunate circumstance, increased their security. Whilst Lafayette, full of hope, was writing to General Washington that he foresaw he could push Lord Cornwallis into a situation in which it would be easy for him, with some assistance from the navy, to cut off his retreat, the general, who had always thought that Lafayette would be very fortunate if he could save Virginia without being cut up himself, spoke to him of his project of attack against New York, granting him permission to come and take part in it, if he wished it, but representing how useful it was to the Virginian army that he should remain at its head. The two letters passed each other; the one written by Lafayette arrived safely, and Washington prepared beforehand to take advantage of the situation of Lord Cornwallis. Gen. Washington's letter was intercepted, and the English, upon seeing that confidential communication, never doubted for a moment but the real intention of the Americans was to attack New York: their own security at Yorktown was therefore complete.[6]

The Count de Grasse, however, arrived with a naval force, and three thousand troops[7] for the land service. He was met at the landing place of Cape Henry by Colonel Gimat, a Frenchman by birth, commander of the American battalion,

[6] James Moody rendered an ill service to those who employed him, by seizing the letter-bag in the Jerseys. Among the letters, those in which General Washington informed Lafayette of the project respecting New York, contained friendly and confidential communications, written in the General's own hand, which could not leave the slightest doubt in any person's mind: they may be found in the publications of the Generals Clinton and Cornwallis, which contain also Lafayette's intercepted letters. But the enemy did not take those in which General Lafayette gave an account to General Washington of his maneuvers, of his hopes, and of all that determined the commander-in-chief to adopt the project on Virginia, nor Washington's answers to that effect; so that when the combined troops made their first march towards the south, General Clinton still remained deceived, owing to the singular chance of the capture of the letter-bag by Moody.—Lafayette.

[7] The entreaties of Count de Rochambeau contributed much towards persuading the Count de Grasse to bring his whole fleet, to land there the three thousand two hundred men, who joined, on their arrival, the

who was charged with dispatches from Lafayette; which explained fully to the admiral his own military position, and that of the enemy, and conjured him to sail immediately into the Chesapeake; to drive the frigates into the James River, that the passage might be kept clear; to blockade the York River; to send two vessels above the position of Lord Cornwallis, before the batteries on the water-side, at Yorktown and Gloucester could be put in a proper state. The Count de Grasse adhered to these proposals, with the exception of not forcing the batteries with two vessels, which maneuver would have made the blockade of Cornwallis by the land troops still more easy of achievement. The Marquis de St. Simon landed with three thousand men at James Island. Lafayette assembled a small corps in the county of Gloucester, led, himself, the American forces on Williamsburg, where he was met by the corps of the Marquis de St. Simon, who came to range themselves under his orders, so that Lord Cornwallis found himself suddenly, as if by enchantment, blockaded both by sea and land.

The combined army, under the orders of Lafayette, was placed in an excellent situation at Williamsburg. It was impossible to arrive there except by two difficult and well-defended passages. Lord Cornwallis presented himself before them in the hope of escaping, by making a forcible attack; but having ascertained the impossibility of forcing them, he only occupied himself with finishing speedily the fortifications of Yorktown; his hopes, however, declined, when the Count de Grasse, having only left the ships necessary for the blockade, and having gone out of the harbor to attack Admiral Graves, forced the English to retire, and returned to his former station in the bay. The French admiral was, however, impatient to return to the islands; he wished that Yorktown should be taken by force of arms. The Marquis de St. Simon was of the same opinion: they both represented strongly to Lafay-

army of Lafayette, and to repair immediately to Cape Henry, in Virginia. This is one more obligation which the common cause of the allies owes to General Rochambeau, who, from his talents, experience, moderation, and his subordination to the general-in-chief, respect for the civil power, and maintenance of discipline, proved that the King of France had made an excellent choice for the command of the auxiliary corps sent to the United States.—Note of M. de Lafayette.

ette that it was just, after such a long, fatiguing, and fortunate campaign, that the glory of making Cornwallis lay down his arms should belong to him who had reduced him to that situation. The admiral offered to send to the attack not only the garrisons from the ships, but all the sailors he should ask for. Lafayette was deaf to this proposal, and answered, that General Washington and the corps of General Rochambeau would soon arrive, and that it was far better to hasten their movements than act without them; and, by making a murderous attack, shed a great deal of blood from a feeling of vanity and a selfish love of glory; that they were certain, after the arrival of the succors, of taking the hostile army by a regular attack, and thus spare the lives of the soldiers; which a good general ought always to respect as much as possible, especially in a country where it was so difficult to obtain others to replace those who fell.

General Washington and Count Rochambeau were the first to arrive: they were soon followed by their troops; but, at the same moment, the Admiral de Grasse wrote word that he was obliged to return to the islands. The whole expedition seemed on the point of failing, and General Washington begged Lafayette to go on board the admiral's ship in the bay, and endeavor to persuade him to change his mind: he succeeded, and the siege of Yorktown was begun. The Count de Rochambeau commanded the French, including the corps of St. Simon; the Americans were divided in two parts; one, under Major-general Lincoln, who had come from the north with some troops; the other, under General Lafayette, who had been joined by two more battalions of light infantry, under the orders of Colonel Hamilton.

It became necessary to attack two redoubts. One of these attacks was confined to the Baron de Viomenil, the other to General Lafayette. The former had expressed, in a somewhat boasting manner, the idea he had of the superiority of the French in an attack of that kind: Lafayette, a little offended, answered, "We are but young soldiers, and we have but one sort of tactic on such occasions, which is, to discharge our muskets, and push on straight with our bayonets." He led on the American troops, of whom he gave the command to Colonel Hamilton, with the Colonels Laurens and Gimat under

him. The American troops took the redoubt with the bayonet. As the firing was still continued on the French side, Lafayette sent an aide-de-camp to the Baron de Viomenil, to ask whether he did not require some succor from the Americans;[8] but the French were not long in taking possession also of the other redoubt, and that success decided soon after the capitulation of Lord Cornwallis, (19th October, 1781.) Nor must the mention of an action be omitted here which was honorable to the humanity of the Americans. The English had disgraced themselves several times, and again recently at New London, by the murder of some imprisoned garrisons. The detachment of Colonel Hamilton did not for an instant make an ill use of their victory; as soon as the enemy deposed their arms, they no longer received the slightest injury. Colonel Hamilton distinguished himself very much in that attack.

Lord Cornwallis had demanded, in the capitulation, the permission of marching out with drums beating and colors flying; the Count de Rochambeau and the French officers were of opinion that this request ought to be granted; the American generals did not oppose this idea; Lafayette, recollecting that the same enemy had required General Lincoln, at the capitulation of Charleston, to furl the American colors and not to play an English march, insisted strongly on using the same measures with them in retaliation, and obtained that these two precise conditions should be inserted in the capitulation. Lord Cornwallis did not himself file out with the detachment. The Generals, Washington, Rochambeau, and Lafayette, sent to present him their compliments by their aides-de-camp. He retained Lafayette's aide-de-camp, young George Washington, and told him that having made this long campaign against General Lafayette, he wished, from the value he annexed to that general's esteem, to give him a private account of the motives which had obliged him to surrender. He told him several things which have since been found in his discussion

[8] The French were much struck on this occasion by the extreme coolness of one of the officers whom Lafayette sent to the Baron de Viomenil, from a secret feeling of pleasure, perhaps, in marking how much the present comparison stood in favor of the American troops. However this might be, Major Barber received a contusion in his side, but would not allow his wound to be dressed until he had executed his commission. —Lafayette.

with General Clinton. Lafayette went the next day to see him. "I know," said Lord Cornwallis, "your humanity towards prisoners, and I recommend my poor army to you." This recommendation was made in a tone which implied that in Lafayette alone he felt real confidence, and placed but little in the Americans. Lafayette therefore replied, "You know, my lord, that the Americans have always been humane towards imprisoned armies;" in allusion to the taking of General Burgoyne at Saratoga.[9] The English army was in fact treated with every possible mark of attention.

Although the French troops held in every respect the place of auxiliary troops, yet the Americans always yielded them every preference in their power relating to food or any other comfort. It is a singular circumstance that when the troops of the Marquis de St. Simon joined those of Lafayette, the young general, although a Frenchman, took upon himself to order that no flour should be delivered to the American troops until the French had received their full provision for three days. The Americans had therefore seldom anything but the flour of Indian corn. He gave the horses of the gentlemen of that country to the French hussars, and the superior officers themselves were obliged to give up theirs: yet not one murmur escaped as to that preference, which the Americans felt ought to be shown to foreigners who came from such a distance to fight in their cause.

The news of the capture of Yorktown was carried to France

[9] Lord Cornwallis affected being indisposed, in order that he might not march out at the head of his troops: they passed between two rows of the American and French army, commanded by General O'Hara, and surrendered their arms at the order of General Lincoln. Each of the generals, Washington, Rochambeau, and Lafayette, sent an aide-de-camp to offer their compliments to Lord Cornwallis. He retained Lafayette's aide-de-camp, Major Washington, the nephew of General Washington, to tell him how anxious he was that the general against whom he had made this campaign should be convinced that he only surrendered from the impossibility of defending himself any longer. The American, French, and English generals visited each other, and everything passed with every possible mark of attention, especially towards Lord Cornwallis, one of the most estimable men of England, who was considered their best general. O'Hara having said one day, at table, to the French generals, affecting not to wish to be overheard by Lafayette, that he considered it as fortunate not to have been taken by the Americans alone, "General O'Hara, probably," replied Lafayette, "does not like repetitions." He had, in fact, been taken with Burgoyne, and has since been taken for the third time at Toulon.—Lafayette.

by a French frigate, who made the voyage in eighteen days. The English were thrown into consternation at that news, which occasioned the downfall of the ministry of Lord North. It was felt in London, as in the rest of all Europe, that the decisive check the English had received, had completely settled the final issue of the conflict, and from that period nothing was thought of but to acknowledge the independence of the United States on favorable terms for Great Britain. Generals Washington and Lafayette wished to take advantage of the superiority of the Count de Grasse in order to attack Charleston, and the English who remained in the southern states. Lafayette was to take his light infantry, as well as the corps of St. Simon, and land on the Charleston side, to cooperate with General Greene, who still commanded in Carolina. It is evident that this project would have been successful. It has since become known that Lord Cornwallis, when he saw Lafayette enter into a canoe to go on board the fleet of the Count de Grasse, said to some English officers, "He is going to decide the loss of Charleston." But the admiral refused obstinately to make any operation upon the coast of North America.[10]

General Lafayette afterwards repaired to congress. To him, who was then but four-and-twenty, the happy issue of that campaign was as flattering a success as it had been decisive to the American cause. He received the instructions of congress, in relation to the affairs of the United States in Europe; and

[10] General Lafayette was to have taken two thousand Americans and St. Simon's corps, who, landing near Charleston, on the sea side, and coöperating with the troops of General Greene, would have secured the capture of the capital of Carolina, and of all the English who were remaining south of New York. Lowering their demands, they then requested that Lafayette should take the five thousand men who were at Wilmington, and who were so much struck by the dangers they had encountered, that they did not retain that post. At length, they contented themselves with asking the admiral to conduct General Wayne and his detachment, which were sent to reënforce Greene's army. He would not do so. It has also since become known, that when Lafayette, returning from his last visit to the admiral, landed at Yorktown, Lord Cornwallis, who was still there, said to his officers, "I lay a bet that he has been making arrangements for our ruin at Charleston." The English acknowledged that the expedition could not fail; but the Count de Grasse did not think he ought to lose more time upon the North American coast, before returning to the defense of the West Indies.—Lafayette.

embarked at Boston in the frigate *Alliance*. He reached France in twenty-three days. The reception he met with, and the credit he enjoyed both at court and in society were constantly and usefully employed in the service of the cause he had embraced.

THE END

ADMIRAL NELSON

THE NAVAL GENIUS WHO MADE BRITAIN "MISTRESS OF THE SEAS"

1758-1805

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Horatio Nelson, who shares with Sir Francis Drake the glory of being Britain's most celebrated sea fighter, did more than any other man to break the early power of Napoleon. Complete as was the military supremacy which Napoleon established for France on land, so equally complete was the naval supremacy which Nelson established for Great Britain over all the oceans. His two chief victories were at the Battle of the Nile in 1798 and at Trafalgar, where he perished in the very hour of completing the conquest of the seas in 1805.

Nelson was not at all a writer, but the greatness of his deeds lends a stirring interest to the letters in which he mentions them. Two of the earlier letters here given are addressed to his wife, whom he met and married in the West Indies. The closing letters are addressed to Lady Hamilton, with whom Nelson conducted an open and intense love affair from 1798 until his death. The affair led to a separation between Nelson and his wife in 1800, but he retained the affection and devotion of his daughter Horatia, to whom he was deeply attached. Lady Hamilton was the wife of the British ambassador at Naples when Nelson brought his fleet there after the Battle of the Nile; and the flow of worldly honors for his victory poured in upon him coincidently with his days of devotion to her. He was made Baron Nelson at home and Duke of Bronte by the sovereign of Naples. Meanwhile the whole world learned of his love affair. Lady Hamilton afterward dwelt in retirement during Nelson's periods of sea service, and gave all her life to him. When he perished on the deck of victory, almost his last words were "Take care of Lady Hamilton." She was, however, rejected by his people, was imprisoned for debt, and finally driven ignominiously to France, where she died in extreme poverty.

NELSON'S LETTER TO MRS. NELSON AFTER TAKING PART IN THE SUCCESSFUL SIEGE OF CALVI IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, WHERE HE LOST AN EYE

Off Leghorn, August 18, 1794.

I LEFT Calvi on the 15th, and hope never to be in it again. I was yesterday in St. Fiorenzo, and to-day shall be safe moored, I expect, in Leghorn; since the ship has been commissioned, this will be the first resting time we have had. As it is all past, I may now tell you, that on the 10th of July a shot having hit our battery, the splinters and stones from it struck me with great violence in the face and breast. Although the blow was so severe as to occasion a great flow of blood from my head, yet I, most fortunately, escaped, having only my right eye nearly deprived of its sight; it was cut down, but it is so far recovered as for me to be able to distinguish light from darkness. As to all the purposes of use, it is gone; however, the blemish is nothing, not to be perceived, unless told. The pupil is nearly the size of the blue part, I don't know the name. At Bastia, I got a sharp cut in the back. You must not think that my hurts confined me; no, nothing but the loss of a limb would have kept me from my duty, and I believe my exertions conduced to preserve me in this general mortality. I am fearful that Mrs. Moutray's son, who was on shore with us, will fall a sacrifice to the climate; he is a lieutenant of the "Victory," a very fine young man, for whom I have a great regard. Lord Hood is quite distressed about him. Poor little Hoste is also extremely ill, and I have great fears about him. One hundred and fifty of my people are in their beds; of two thousand men I am the most healthy. Josiah is very well, and a clever, smart young man, for so I must call him, his sense demands it.—Yours, etc.

HORATIO NELSON.

NELSON'S LETTER TO THE BRITISH ADMIRAL-IN-CHIEF, SIR JOHN JERVIS, AFTER LOSING AN ARM IN THE UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACK ON SANTA CRUZ

"Theseus," July 27, 1797.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am become a burthen to my friends, and useless to my country; but by my letter wrote the 24th, you

will perceive my anxiety for the promotion of my son-in-law, Josiah Nisbet. When I leave your command, I become dead to the world; I go hence and am no more seen. If from poor Bowen's loss, you think it proper to oblige me, I rest confident you will do it; the boy is under obligations to me, but he repaid me by bringing me from the mole of Santa Cruz. I hope you will be able to give me a frigate to convey the remains of my carcase to England. God bless you, my dear sir, and believe me, your most obliged and faithful

HORATIO NELSON.

You will excuse my scrawl, considering it is my first attempt.

NELSON'S LETTER TO HIS WIFE ON THE SAME OCCASION

"Theseus," August 1797.

MY DEAREST FANNY,—I am so confident of your affection, that I feel the pleasure you will receive will be equal, whether my letter is wrote by my right hand or left. It was the chance of war, and I have great reason to be thankful; and I know that it will add much to your pleasure in finding that Josiah, under God's providence, was principally instrumental in saving my life. As to my health, it never was better; and now I hope soon to return to you; and my country, I trust, will not allow me any longer to linger in want of that pecuniary assistance which I have been fighting the whole war to preserve to her. But I shall not be surprised to be neglected and forgot, as probably I shall no longer be considered as useful. However, I shall feel rich if I continue to enjoy your affection. The cottage is now more necessary than ever. You will see by the papers, Lieutenant Weatherhead is gone. Poor fellow! he lived four days after he was shot. I shall not close this letter till I join the fleet, which seems distant, for it's been calm these three days past. I am fortunate in having a good surgeon on board; in short, I am much more recovered than I could have expected. I beg neither you or my father will think much of this mishap; my mind has long been made up to such an event. God bless you, and believe me your most affectionate husband,

HORATIO NELSON.

NELSON'S LETTER TO LADY HAMILTON SOON AFTER HIS SUCCESSFUL STORMING OF COPENHAGEN HAD LED TO HIS BEING MADE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

St. George, Kioge Bay, Apr. 25, 1801.

My dearest Friend,—Sir Hyde has just sent me word that the sloop "Arrow" sails for England this day, and I have only time to say that I hope in a fortnight to be in London. I am in expectation every moment of the removal of the fleet from the Baltic. Be that as it may, I will not remain; no, not if I were sure of being made a duke with fifty thousand pounds a year. I wish for happiness to be my reward, not titles or money.

To-morrow is the birthday of Saint Emma. She is my guardian angel. It is not in my power to do much honor to her in this place, but I have invited all the admirals and all the captains who have the happiness of knowing you, and, of course, of experiencing your kindness while in the Mediterranean. You may rely that my saint is more adored in this fleet than all the saints in the Roman Calendar. I know you prayed for me at the Nile and here, and if the prayers of the good, as we are taught to believe, are of avail at the Throne of Grace, why may not yours have saved my life? I own myself a believer in God; and if I have any merit in not fearing death, it is because I feel his power can shelter me when he pleases, and that I must fall when it shall be his good pleasure.

May the God of heaven and earth bless and preserve you, my dearest friend, for the greatest happiness you can wish for in this world, is the constant prayer of your real, sincere, affectionate friend till death.

Nelson & Bronté.

NELSON TO LADY HAMILTON WHILE COMMANDING THE MEDITERRANEAN FLEET

At Sea, Aug. 21, 1803.

We have had, my dearest Emma, two days pretty strong gales. The "Canopus" has lost her fore yard, but we shall put her in order again. This is the fourth gale we have had

since July 6, but the "Victory" is so easy at sea that I trust we shall never receive any material damage.

It is never my intention, if I can help it, to go into any port; my business is at sea, and to get hold of the French fleet; and so I shall, by patience and perseverance. . . .

I entreat that you will let nothing fret you only believe, once for all, that I am ever your own Nelson. I have not a thought, except on you and the French fleet. All my thoughts, plans, and toils tend to those two objects, and I will embrace them both so close, when I can lay hold of either one or the other, that the Devil himself should not separate us. Don't laugh at my putting the French fleet and you together, but you cannot be separated. I long to see you both in your proper places,—the French fleet at sea, you at dear Merton, which, in every sense of the word, I expect to find a paradise. I send you a copy of Gibb's letter, my answer, and a letter to Mr. Noble about your things, and I will take all care that they shall get home safe.

Ever yours,

NELSON.

NELSON TO LADY HAMILTON JUST BEFORE THE VICTORY OF TRAFALGAR

This, Nelson's last letter to Lady Hamilton, was found on his desk after death. It is now in the British Museum, and is indorsed with these words in Lady Hamilton's handwriting: "This letter was found open on *his* desk and brought to Lady Hamilton by Captain Hardy. Oh miserable wretched Emma! Oh glorious and happy Nelson!"

"Victory," Oct. 19, 1805, Noon.
Cadiz, E. S. E. 16 leagues.

My dearest beloved Emma, the dear friend of my bosom. The signal has been made that the enemy's combined fleet are coming out of port. We have very little wind, so that I have no hopes of seeing them before to-morrow. May the God of battles crown my endeavors with success; at all events I will take care that my name shall ever be most dear to you and to Horatia, both of whom I love as much as my own life. And as my last writing before the battle will be to you, so I hope

in God that I shall live to finish my letter after the battle. May Heaven bless you, prays

Your

NELSON & BRONTÉ.

Oct. 20. In the morning we were close to the mouth of the straits, but the wind had not come far enough to the westward to allow the combined fleets to weather the shoals of Trafalgar; but they were counted as far as forty sail of ships of war, which I suppose to be thirty-four of the line and six frigates. A group of them was seen off the light-house at Cadiz this morning; but it blows so very fresh and thick weather that I rather believe they will go into harbor before night. May God Almighty give us success over these fellows and enable us to get a peace.

THE END

MARY ROBINSON

ACTRESS, POETESS, AND PLAYTOY OF A BRITISH PRINCE

1758-1800

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

The memoirs of the beautiful and gifted poetess and actress, Mrs. Robinson, portray vividly the sorrows which a woman, even of the most unusual mental and personal attraction, must endure who trusts her virtue and happiness to a rich profligate.

Married at fifteen to a worthless spendthrift, enduring simultaneously maternity and imprisonment for debt with her impecunious husband, this brave little woman gives a touching picture of motherly love and devotion. Beset by all the dangers and pitfalls to which so talented and lovely a woman is always exposed, and without the natural protection of her husband, she turned to literature and the stage for a livelihood.

As the protégée of David Garrick, she became the rage of London. One must sympathize with her loveless life, when she finally decided to give up society and the stage to become the companion and mistress of the then Prince of Wales, afterward King George IV. Pathetically she reiterates her probity until her wooing by the Prince, whom she met while playing Shakespeare's heroine, Perdita. Prince George was then a charming youth of eighteen, and for two years he kept all the flowery promises made as her "Florizel." Then he repudiated the gentle, tender-hearted little poetess. Later she was attacked by a disease of the lower limbs which left her partly paralyzed. Here the real greatness of her soul shone forth; for, though deserted and deadly ill, she did not despair, but turned for solace to the only thing that outlasts empires—literature. In quick succession, she poured out poems, plays, stories and essays on woman's lot. Her salon became a rendezvous for the talent of the day, and her later life of pain was thus solaced by intellectual friendships.

In her biography we find a vivid picture of the fashionable world of 1781. For a time, in pale pink satin and sables (for she constantly shows her very feminine love of dress), she is the center of all admiring eyes at the Pantheon, with its colored lamps, brilliant music, and gay ladies in hoops. Again, at Vauxhall the besought beauty barely escapes

an abduction plot with coach and loaded pistols. One cannot close this brave, tender, and pathetic life story without recalling the divine command: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her."

MRS. MARY ROBINSON

At the period when the ancient city of Bristol was besieged by Fairfax's army, the troops being stationed on a rising ground in the vicinity of the suburbs, a great part of the venerable minster was destroyed by the cannonading before Prince Rupert surrendered to the enemy; and the beautiful Gothic structure, which at this moment fills the contemplative mind with melancholy awe, was reduced to but little more than one-half of the original fabric. Adjoining to the consecrated hill, whose antique tower resists the ravages of time, once stood a monastery of monks of the order of St. Augustine. This building formed a part of the spacious boundaries which fell before the attacks of the enemy, and became a part of the ruin, which never was repaired or re-raised to its former Gothic splendors.

On this spot was built a private house, partly of simple, and partly of modern architecture. The front faced a small garden, the gates of which opened to the Minster Green (now called the College Green); the west side was bounded by the cathedral, and the back was supported by the ancient cloisters of St. Augustine's monastery. A spot more calculated to inspire the soul with mournful meditation can scarcely be found amidst the monuments of antiquity.

In this venerable mansion there was one chamber whose dismal and singular constructure left no doubt of its having been a part of the original monastery. It was supported by the moldering arches of the cloisters, dark, Gothic, and opening on the minster sanctuary, not only by casement windows that shed a dim midday gloom, but by a narrow winding staircase, at the foot of which an iron-spiked door led to the long gloomy path of cloistered solitude. This place remained in the situation in which I describe it in the year 1776, and probably may, in a more ruined state, continue so to this hour.

In this awe-inspiring habitation, which I shall henceforth

denominate the Minster House, during a tempestuous night, on the 27th of November, 1758, I first opened my eyes to this world of duplicity and sorrow. I have often heard my mother say that a more stormy hour she never remembered. The wind whistled round the dark pinnacles of the minster tower, and the rain beat in torrents against the casements of her chamber. Through life the tempest has followed my footsteps, and I have in vain looked for a short interval of repose from the perseverance of sorrow.

In the male line I am descended from a respectable family in Ireland, the original name of which was MacDermott. From an Irish estate, my great-grandfather changed it to that of Darby. My father, who was born in America, was a man of strong mind, high spirit, and great personal intrepidity. Many anecdotes, well authenticated, and which, being irrefragable, are recorded as just tributes to his fame and memory, shall, in the course of these memoirs, confirm this assertion.

My mother was the grandchild of Catherine Seys, one of the daughters and co-heiresses of Richard Seys, Esq., of Boverton Castle, in Glamorganshire. The sister of my great-grandmother, named Anne, married Peter, Lord King, who was nephew, in the female line, to the learned and truly illustrious John Locke—a name that has acquired celebrity which admits of no augmented panegyric.

Catherine Seys was a woman of great piety and virtue—a character which she transferred to her daughter, and which has also been acknowledged as justly due to her sister, Lady King.[1] She quitted this life when my grandmother was yet a child, leaving an only daughter, whose father also died while she was in her infancy. By this privation of paternal care my grandmother became the *élève* of her mother's father, and passed the early part of her life at the family castle in Glamorganshire. From this period till the marriage of my mother, I can give but a brief account. All I know is, that my grandmother, though wedded unhappily, to the latest

[1] Collins's "Peerage" gives the following account of this lady: "Peter, Lord King, married Anne, daughter of Richard Seys, Esq., of Boverton, in Glamorganshire, with whom he lived to the day of his death in perfect love and happiness, and left by her four sons and two daughters."

period of her existence was a woman of amiable and simple manners, unaffected piety, and exemplary virtue. I remember her well; and I speak not only from report, but from my own knowledge. She died in the year 1780.

My mother was born at Bridgwater, in Somersetshire, in the house near the bridge, which is now occupied by Jonathan Chub, Esq., a relation of my beloved and lamented parent, and a gentleman who, to acknowledged worth and a powerful understanding, adds a superior claim to attention by all the acquirements of a scholar and a philosopher.

My mother, who never was what may be called a handsome woman, had nevertheless, in her youth, a peculiarly neat figure, and a vivacity of manner which obtained her many suitors. Among others, a young gentleman of good family, of the name of Storr, paid his addresses. My father was the object of my mother's choice, though her relations rather wished her to form a matrimonial alliance with Mr. S. The conflict between affection and duty was at length decided in favor of my father, and the rejected lover set out in despair for Bristol. From thence, in a few days after his arrival, he took his passage in a merchantman for a distant part of the globe; and from that hour no intelligence ever arrived of his fate or fortune. I have often heard my mother speak of this gentleman with regret and sorrow.

My mother was between twenty and thirty years of age at the period of her marriage. The ceremony was performed at Dunyatt, in the county of Somerset. My father was shortly after settled at Bristol, and during the second year after their union a son was born to bless and honor them.[2]

Three years after my mother gave birth to a daughter, named Elizabeth, who died of the smallpox at the age of two years and ten months. In the second winter following this event, which deeply afflicted the most affectionate of parents, I was born. She had afterward two sons: William, who died at the age of six years; and George, who is now a respectable merchant at Leghorn, in Tuscany.

All the offspring of my parents were, in their infancy, un-

[2] I may with truth, and without vanity, make this remark. The estimable being here mentioned was named John; he died on the 7th of December, 1790, at Leghorn, in Tuscany, where he had been many years established as a merchant of the first respectability.

commonly handsome, excepting myself. The boys were fair and lusty, with auburn hair, light blue eyes, and countenances peculiarly animated and lovely. I was swarthy; my eyes were singularly large in proportion to my face, which was small and round, exhibiting features peculiarly marked with the most pensive and melancholy cast.

The great difference betwixt my brothers and myself, in point of personal beauty, tended much to endear me to my parents, particularly to my father, whom I strongly resembled. The early propensities of my life were tinctured with romantic and singular characteristics; some of which I shall here mention, as proofs that the mind is never to be diverted from its original bent, and that every event of my life has more or less been marked by the progressive evils of a too acute sensibility.

The nursery in which I passed my hours of infancy was so near the great aisle of the minster that the organ, which re-echoed its deep tones, accompanied by the chanting of the choristers, was distinctly heard both at morning and evening service. I remember with what pleasure I used to listen, and how much I was delighted whenever I was permitted to sit on the winding steps which led from the aisle to the cloisters. I can at this moment recall to memory the sensations I then experienced—the tones that seemed to thrill through my heart, the longing which I felt to unite my feeble voice to the full anthem, and the awful though sublime impression which the church service never failed to make upon my feelings. While my brothers were playing on the green before the minster, the servant who attended us has often, by my earnest entreaties, suffered me to remain beneath the great eagle which stood in the center of the aisle, to support the book from which the clergyman read the lessons of the day; and nothing could keep me away, even in the coldest seasons, but the stern looks of an old man, whom I named Black John from the color of his beard and complexion, and whose occupations within the sacred precincts were those of a bell-ringer and sexton.

The early hours of boarding-school study I passed under the tuition of the Misses More, sisters to the Lady of that name whose talents have been so often celebrated. The edu-

cation of their young pupils was undertaken by the five sisters. "In my mind's eye," I see them now before me; while every circumstance of those early days is minutely and indelibly impressed upon my memory.

In my early days my father was prosperous, and my mother was the happiest of wives. She adored her children; she devoted her thoughts and divided her affections between them and the tenderest of husbands. Their spirits now, I trust, are in happier regions, blest, and reunited forever.

If there could be found a fault in the conduct of my mother toward her children, it was that of a too unlimited indulgence, a too tender care, which but little served to arm their breast against the perpetual arrows of mortal vicissitude. My father's commercial concerns were crowned with prosperity. His house was opened by hospitality, and his generosity was only equaled by the liberality of fortune: every day augmented his successes; every hour seemed to increase his domestic felicity, till I attained my ninth year, when a change took place as sudden as it was unfortunate, at a moment when every luxury, every happiness, not only brightened the present, but gave promise of future felicity. A scheme was suggested to my father, as wild and romantic as it was perilous to hazard, which was no less than that of establishing a whale fishery on the coast of Labrador, and of civilizing the Esquimaux Indians, in order to employ them in the extensive undertaking. During two years this eccentric plan occupied his thoughts by day, his dreams by night: all the smiles of prosperity could not tranquilize the restless spirit, and while he anticipated an acquirement of fame, he little considered the perils that would attend his fortune.

Full of the important business, my misguided parent repaired to the metropolis, and on his arrival laid the plan before Lord Chatham (father to the present Mr. William Pitt), the chancellor Lord Northington, who was my godfather, and several other equally distinguished personages; who all not only approved the plan, but commended the laudable and public spirit which induced my father to suggest it. The prospect appeared full of promise, and the Labrador whale fishery was expected to be equally productive with that of Greenland. My parent's commercial connections were

of the highest respectability, while his own name for worth and integrity gave a powerful sanction to the eccentric undertaking.

In order to facilitate this plan, my father deemed it absolutely necessary to reside at least two years in America. My mother, who felt an invincible antipathy to the sea, heard his determination with grief and horror. All the persuasive powers of affection failed to detain him; all the pleadings of reason, prudence, a fond wife, and an infant family, proved ineffectual. My father was determined on departing, and my mother's unconquerable timidity prevented her being the companion of his voyage. From this epoch I date the sorrows of my family.

He sailed for America. My mother's heart was almost bursting with anguish; but even death would to her have been preferable to the horrors of crossing a tempestuous ocean and quitting her children, my father having resolved on leaving my brothers and myself in England for education.

Still the comforts, and even the luxuries of life distinguished our habitation. The tenderness of my mother's affection made her lavish of every elegance; and the darlings of her bosom were dressed, waited on, watched, and indulged with a degree of fondness bordering on folly. My clothes were sent for from London; my fancy was indulged to the extent of its caprices; I was flattered and praised into a belief that I was a being of superior order. To sing, to play a lesson on the harpsichord, to recite an elegy, and to make doggerel verses, made the extent of my occupations, while my person improved, and my mother's indulgence was almost unexampled.

My father, several years before his departure for America, had removed from the Minster House, and resided in one larger and more convenient for his increased family. This habitation was elegantly arranged; all the luxuries of plate, silk furniture, foreign wines, etc., evinced his knowledge of what was worth enjoying, and displayed that warm hospitality which is often the characteristic of a British merchant. This disposition for the good things of the world influenced even the disposal of his children's comforts. The bed in which I slept was of the richest crimson damask; the dresses which

we wore were of the finest cambric; during the summer months we were sent to Clifton Hill for the advantages of a purer air; and I never was permitted to board at school, or to pass a night of separation from the fondest of mothers.

Many months elapsed, and my mother continued to receive the kindest letters from that husband whose rash scheme filled her bosom with regret and apprehension.

At length a total silence of several months awoke her mind to the sorrows of neglect, the torture of compunction; she now lamented the timidity which had divided her from a husband's bosom, the natural fondness which had bound her to her children; for while her heart bled with sorrow and palpitated with apprehension, the dreadful secret was unfolded, and the cause of my father's silence was discovered to be a new attachment—a mistress, whose resisting nerves could brave the stormy ocean, and who had consented to remain two years with him in the frozen wilds of America.

It was at this period of trial that my mother was enabled to prove, by that unerring touchstone, adversity, who were her real and disinterested friends. Many, with affected commiseration, dropped a tear—or rather seemed to drop one—on the disappointments of our family; while others, with a malignant triumph, condemned the expensive style in which my father had reared his children, the studied elegance which had characterized my mother's dress and habitation, and the hospitality, which was now marked by the ungrateful epithet of prodigal luxuriance, but which had evinced the open liberality of my father's heart.

At this period my brother William died. He was only six years of age, but a promising and most lovely infant. His sudden death, in consequence of the measles, nearly deprived my mother of her senses. She was deeply affected; but she found, after a period of time, that consolation which, springing from the bosom of an amiable friend, doubly solaced her afflictions. This female was one of the most estimable of her sex; she had been the widow of Sir Charles Erskine, and was then the wife of a respectable medical man who resided at Bristol.

In the society of Lady Erskine my mother gradually recovered her serenity of mind, or rather found it soften into a

religious resignation. But the event of her domestic loss by death was less painful than that which she felt in the alienation of my father's affections. She frequently heard that he resided in America with his mistress, till, at the expiration of another year, she received a summons to meet him in London.

Language would but feebly describe the varying emotions which struggled in her bosom. At this interesting era she was preparing to encounter the freezing scorn, or the contrite glances, of either an estranged or a repentant husband; in either case her situation was replete with anticipated chagrin, for she loved him too tenderly not to participate even in the anguish of his compunction. His letter, which was coldly civil, requested particularly that the children might be the companions of her journey. We departed for the metropolis.

I was not then quite ten years old, though so tall and formed in my person that I might have passed for twelve or thirteen. On our arrival in London we repaired to my father's lodgings in Spring Gardens. He received us, after three years' absence, with a mixture of pain and pleasure; he embraced us with tears, and his voice was scarcely articulate. My mother's agitation was indescribable; she received a cold embrace at their meeting—it was the last she ever received from her alienated husband.

As soon as the first conflicts seemed to subside, my father informed my mother that he was determined to place my brother and myself at a school in the vicinity of London; that he purposed very shortly returning to America, and that he would readily pay for my mother's board in any private and respectable family. This information seemed like a death-blow to their domestic hopes. It was in vain that my mother essayed to change his resolution, and influence his heart in pronouncing a milder judgment: my father was held by a fatal fascination; he was the slave of a young and artful woman, who had availed herself of his American solitude, to undermine his affections for his wife and the felicity of his family.

Within a few days of our arrival in London we were placed for education in a school at Chelsea. The mistress of this seminary was perhaps one of the most extraordinary women

that ever graced, or disgraced, society; her name was Meribah Lorrington. She was the most extensively accomplished female that I ever remember to have met with; her mental powers were no less capable of cultivation than superiorly cultivated. Meribah was early instructed in all the modern accomplishments, as well as in classical knowledge. She was mistress of the Latin, French, and Italian languages; she was said to be a perfect arithmetician and astronomer, and possessed the art of painting on silk to a degree of exquisite perfection. But, alas! with all these advantages, she was addicted to one vice, which at times so completely absorbed her faculties as to deprive her of every power, either mental or corporeal. Thus, daily and hourly, her superior acquirements, her enlightened understanding, yielded to the intemperance of her ruling infatuation, and every power of reflection seemed lost in the unfeminine propensity.

All that I ever learned I acquired from this extraordinary woman. In those hours when her senses were not intoxicated, she would delight in the task of instructing me. She had only five or six pupils, and it was my lot to be her particular favorite. She always, out of school, called me her little friend, and made no scruple of conversing with me (sometimes half the night, for I slept in her chamber), on domestic and confidential affairs. I felt for her a very sincere affection, and I listened with peculiar attention to all the lessons she inculcated. Once I recollect her mentioning the particular failing which disgraced so intelligent a being. She pleaded, in excuse of it, the immitigable regret of a widowed heart, and with compunction declared that she flew to intoxication as the only refuge from the pang of prevailing sorrow. I continued more than twelve months under the care of Mrs. Lorrington, during which period my mother boarded in a clergyman's family at Chelsea. I applied rigidly to study, and acquired a taste for books, which has never, from that time, deserted me. Mrs. Lorrington frequently read to me after school hours, and I to her. I sometimes indulged my fancy in writing verses, or composing rebuses, and my governess never failed to applaud the juvenile compositions I presented to her. Some of them, which I preserved and printed in a small volume shortly after my marriage, were written

when I was between twelve and thirteen years of age; but as love was the theme of my poetical fantasies, I never showed them to my mother till I was about to publish them.

I had remained a year and two months with Mrs. Lorrington, when pecuniary derangements obliged her to give up her school. Her father's manners were singularly disgusting, as was his appearance; for he wore a silvery beard which reached to his breast; and a kind of Persian robe which gave him the external appearance of a necromancer. He was of the Anabaptist persuasion, and so stern in his conversation that the young pupils were exposed to perpetual terror. Added to these circumstances, the failing of his daughter became so evident, that even during school hours she was frequently in a state of confirmed intoxication. These events conspired to break up the establishment, and I was shortly after removed to a boarding-school at Battersea.

The mistress of this seminary, Mrs. Leigh, was a lively, sensible, and accomplished woman; her daughter was only a few years older than myself, and extremely amiable as well as lovely. Here I might have been happy, but my father's remissness in sending pecuniary supplies, and my mother's dread of pecuniary inconvenience, induced her to remove me; my brother, nevertheless, still remained under the care of the Reverend Mr. Gore, at Chelsea.

Several months elapsed, and no remittance arrived from my father. I was now near fourteen years old, and my mother began to foresee the vicissitudes to which my youth might be exposed, unprotected, tenderly educated, and without the advantages of fortune. My father's impracticable scheme had impoverished his fortune, and deprived his children of that affluence which, in their infancy, they had been taught to hope for. I cannot speak of my own person, but my partial friends were too apt to flatter me. I was naturally of a pensive and melancholy character; my reflections on the changes of fortune frequently gave me an air of dejection which perhaps excited an interest beyond what might have been awakened by the vivacity or bloom of juvenility.

I adored my mother. She was the mildest, the most unoffending of existing mortals; her temper was cheerful, as her heart was innocent; she beheld her children as it seemed

fatherless, and she resolved, by honorable means, to support them. For this purpose a convenient house was hired at Little Chelsea, and furnished, for a ladies' boarding-school. Assistants of every kind were engaged, and I was deemed worthy of an occupation that flattered my self-love and impressed my mind with a sort of domestic consequence. The English language was my department in the seminary, and I was permitted to select passages both in prose and verse for the studies of my infant pupils. It was also my occupation to superintend their wardrobes, to see them dressed and undressed by the servants or half-boarders, and to read sacred and moral lessons on saints' days and Sunday evenings.

Shortly after my mother had established herself at Chelsea, on a summer's evening, as I was sitting at the window, I heard a deep sigh, or rather a groan of anguish, which suddenly attracted my attention. The night was approaching rapidly, and I looked toward the gate before the house, where I observed a woman evidently laboring under excessive affliction; I instantly descended and approached her. She, bursting into tears, asked whether I did not know her. Her dress was torn and filthy; she was almost naked; and an old bonnet, which nearly hid her face, so completely disfigured her features that I had not the smallest idea of the person who was then almost sinking before me. I gave her a small sum of money, and inquired the cause of her apparent agony. She took my hand and pressed it to her lips. "Sweet girl," said she, "you are still the angel I ever knew you!" I was astonished. She raised her bonnet—her fine dark eyes met mine. It was Mrs. Lorrington. I led her into the house; my mother was not at home. I took her to my chamber, and, with the assistance of a lady who was our French teacher, I clothed and comforted her. She refused to say how she came to be in so deplorable a situation, and took her leave. It was in vain that I entreated, that I conjured her to let me know where I might send to her. She refused to give me her address, but promised that in a few days she would call on me again. It is impossible to describe the wretched appearance of this accomplished woman! The failing to which she had now yielded, as to a monster that would destroy her, was evident even at the moment when she was speaking to me. I

saw no more of her; but to my infinite regret, I was informed some years after that she had died, the martyr of a premature decay, brought on by the indulgence of her propensity to intoxication, in the workhouse of Chelsea!

The number of my mother's pupils in a few months amounted to ten or twelve, and just at a period when an honorable independence promised to cheer the days of an unexampled parent, my father unexpectedly returned from America. The pride of his soul was deeply wounded by the step which my mother had taken; he was offended even beyond the bounds of reason: he considered his name as disgraced, his conjugal reputation tarnished, by the public mode which his wife had adopted of revealing to the world her unprotected situation. A prouder heart never palpitated in the breast of man than that of my father: tenacious of fame, ardent in the pursuit of visionary schemes, he could not endure the exposure of his altered fortune; while Hope still beguiled him with her flattering promise that time would favor his projects, and Fortune, at some future period, reward him with marked success.

At the expiration of eight months my mother, by my father's positive command, broke up her establishment and returned to London. My father's provision for his family was scanty, his visits few. He had a new scheme on foot respecting the Labrador coast, the particulars of which I do not remember, and all his zeal, united with all his interest, was employed in promoting its accomplishment. My mother, knowing that my father publicly resided with his mistress, did not even hope for his returning affection. She devoted herself to her children, and endured her sorrows with the patience of conscious rectitude.

At this period my father frequently called upon us, and often attended me while we walked in the fields near Marylebone. His conversation was generally of a domestic nature, and he always lamented that fatal attachment, which was now too strongly cemented by time and obligations ever to be dissolved without an ample provision for Elenor, which was the name of my father's mistress. We were received with the most marked attention and politeness (I was presented as the goddaughter of the late Chancellor Lord Northington), and

my father was requested to dine with his lordship a few days after.

The finishing points of my education I received at Oxford House, Marylebone. I was at this period within a few months of fifteen years of age, tall, and nearly such as my partial friends, the few whose affection has followed me from childhood, remember me. My early love for lyric harmony had led me to a fondness for the more sublime scenes of dramatic poetry. I embraced every leisure moment to write verses; I even fancied that I could compose a tragedy, and more than once unsuccessfully attempted the arduous undertaking.

The dancing-master at Oxford House, Mr. Hussey, was then ballet-master at Covent Garden Theater. Mrs. Hervey, the governess, mentioned me to him as possessing an extraordinary genius for dramatic exhibitions. My figure was commanding for my age, and (my father's pecuniary embarrassments augmenting by the failure of another American project) my mother was consulted as to the propriety of my making the stage my profession. Many cited examples of females who, even in that perilous and arduous situation, preserved an unspotted fame, inclined her to listen to the suggestion, and to allow of my consulting some master of the art as to my capability of becoming an ornament to the theater.

Previous to this idea my father had again quitted England. He left his wife with assurances of good-will, his children with all the agonies of parental regret. When he took leave of my mother, his emphatic words were these,—I never shall forget them,—"Take care that no dishonor falls upon my daughter. If she is not safe at my return, I will annihilate you!" My mother heard the stern injunction, and trembled while he repeated it.

I was, in consequence of my wish to appear on the stage, introduced to Mr. Hull, of Covent Garden Theater; he then resided in King Street, Soho. He heard me recite some passages of the character of Jane Shore, and seemed delighted with my attempt. I was shortly after presented, by a friend of my mother's, to Mr. Garrick;[3] Mr. Murphy, the celebrated

[3] David Garrick, the famous actor and manager of Drury Lane Theater, made his last appearance on the stage on the 10th of June, 1776, he being then in his sixtieth year.

dramatic poet, was one of the party, and we passed the evening at the house of the British Roscius in the Adelphi. This was during the last year that he dignified the profession by his public appearance. Mr. Garrick's encomiums were of the most gratifying kind. He determined that he would appear in the same play with me on the first night's trial; but what part to choose for my début was a difficult question. I was too young for anything beyond the girlish character, and the dignity of tragedy afforded but few opportunities for the display of such juvenile talents. After some hesitation my tutor fixed on the part of Cordelia. His own Lear can never be forgotten.

It was not till the period when everything was arranged for my appearance that the last solemn injunction, so emphatically uttered by my father, nearly palsied my mother's resolution. She dreaded the perils, the temptations to which an unprotected girl would be exposed in so public a situation; while my ardent fancy was busied in contemplating a thousand triumphs in which my vanity would be publicly gratified without the smallest sacrifice of my private character.

While this plan was in agitation, I was one evening at Drury Lane Theater with my mother and a small party of her friends, when an officer entered the box. His eyes were fixed on me, and his persevering attention at length nearly overwhelmed me with confusion. The entertainment being finished, we departed. The stranger followed us. At that period my mother resided in Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, for the protection which a venerable and respectable friend offered at a moment when it was so necessary. This friend was the late Samuel Cox, Esq., the intimate friend of Mr. Garrick, and an honor to those laws of which he was a distinguished professor.

It was Mr. Garrick's particular request that I would frequent the theater as much as possible till the period fixed on for my appearance on the stage. I had now just completed my fifteenth year, and my little heart throbbed with impatience for the hour of trial. My tutor was most sanguine in his expectations of my success, and every rehearsal seemed to strengthen his flattering opinion.

I had, at this period, a professed admirer, a man of splen-

did fortune, but nearly old enough to be my grandfather. This suit I never would listen to; and the drama, the delightful drama, seemed the very criterion of all human happiness.

I now found myself an object of attention whenever I appeared at the theater. I had been too often in public not to be observed, and it was buzzed about that I was the juvenile pupil of Garrick,—the promised Cordelia. My person improved daily; yet a sort of dignified air, which from a child I had acquired, effectually shielded me from the attacks of impertinence or curiosity. Garrick was delighted with everything I did. He would sometimes dance a minuet with me, sometimes request me to sing the favorite ballads of the day; but the circumstance which most pleased him was my tone of voice, which he frequently told me closely resembled that of his favorite Cibber.[4]

Never shall I forget the enchanting hours which I passed in Mr. Garrick's society; he appeared to me as one who possessed more power, both to awe and to attract, than any man I ever met with. His smile was fascinating, but he had at times a restless peevishness of tone which excessively affected his hearers; at least it affected me so that I never shall forget it.

Opposite to the house in which I resided lived John Vernon, Esq., an eminent solicitor. I observed a young inmate of his habitation frequently watching me with more than ordinary attention. He was handsome in person, and his countenance was overcast by a sort of languor, the effect of sickness, which rendered it peculiarly interesting. Frequently, when I approached the window of our drawing-room, this young observer would bow or turn away with evident emotion. I related the circumstance to my mother, and from that time the lower shutters of our windows were perpetually closed. The young lawyer often excited my mirth, and my mother's

[4]Susannah Cibber, who gained considerable fame as a singer in oratorio before becoming an actress. Her first success as a player was gained at Covent Garden, but in 1753 she joined Garrick's company at Drury Lane, of which she remained a member until her death in 1766. Garrick, who greatly admired her genius, on hearing of her demise, declared, "Then tragedy is dead on one side." She lies buried in Westminster Abbey.

indignation; and the injunction of my father was frequently repeated by her, with the addition of her wish, that I was "once well married."

Every attention which was now paid to me augmented my dear mother's apprehensions. She fancied every man a seducer, and every hour an hour of accumulating peril! I know what she was doomed to feel, for that Being who formed my sensitive and perpetually aching heart knows that I have since felt it.

Among other friends who were in the habit of visiting my mother there was one, a Mr. Wayman, an attorney of whom she entertained the highest opinion. He was distinguished by the patronage of Mr. Cox, and his reputation required no other voucher. One evening a party of six was proposed for the following Sunday; with much persuasion my mother consented to go, and to allow that I should also attend her. Greenwich was the place fixed on for the dinner, and we prepared for the day of recreation. It was then the fashion to wear silks. I remember that I wore a nightgown of pale blue lustring, with a chip hat trimmed with ribbons of the same color. Never was I dressed so perfectly to my own satisfaction; I anticipated a day of admiration. Heaven can bear witness that to me it was a day of fatal victory!

On our stopping at the "Star and Garter," at Greenwich, the person who came to hand me from the carriage was our opposite neighbor in Southampton Buildings. I was confused, but my mother was indignant. Mr. Wayman presented his young friend,—that friend who was ordained to be my husband!

Our party dined, and early in the evening we returned to London. Mr. Robinson remained at Greenwich for the benefit of the air, being recently recovered from a fit of sickness. During the remainder of the evening Mr. Wayman expatiated on the many good qualities of his friend Mr. Robinson: spoke of his future expectations from a rich old uncle; of his probable advancement in his profession; and, more than all, of his enthusiastic admiration of me.

A few days after, Mr. Robinson paid my mother a visit. We had now removed to Villars Street, York Buildings. My mother's fondness for books of a moral and religious char-

acter was not lost upon my new lover, and elegantly bound editions of Hervey's "Meditations," with some others of a similar description, were presented as small tokens of admiration and respect. My mother was beguiled by these little interesting attentions, and soon began to feel a strong predilection in favor of Mr. Robinson.

Every day some new mark of respect augmented my mother's favorable opinion; till Mr. Robinson became so great a favorite that he seemed to her the most perfect of existing beings. Just at this period my brother George sickened for the smallpox; my mother idolized him; he was dangerously ill. Mr. Robinson was indefatigable in his attentions, and my appearance on the stage was postponed till the period of his perfect recovery. Day and night Mr. Robinson devoted himself to the task of consoling my mother, and of attending to her darling boy; hourly, and indeed momentarily, Mr. Robinson's praises were reiterated with enthusiasm by my mother. He was "the kindest, the best of mortals!" the least addicted to worldly follies, and the man, of all others, whom she should adore as a son-in-law.

My brother recovered at the period when I sickened from the infection of his disease. I felt little terror at the approaches of a dangerous and deforming malady; for, I know not why, but personal beauty has never been to me an object of material solicitude. It was now that Mr. Robinson exerted all his assiduity to win my affections; it was when a destructive disorder menaced my features and the few graces that nature had lent them, that he professed a disinterested fondness; every day he attended with the zeal of a brother, and that zeal made an impression of gratitude upon my heart, which was the source of all my succeeding sorrows.

During my illness Mr. Robinson so powerfully wrought upon the feelings of my mother, that she prevailed on me to promise, in case I should recover, to give him my hand in marriage. The words of my father were frequently repeated, not without some innuendoes that I refused my ready consent to a union with Mr. Robinson from a blind partiality to the libertine Captain ——. Repeatedly urged and hourly reminded of my father's vow, I at last consented, and the banns were published while I was yet lying on a bed of sickness.

I was then only a few months advanced in my sixteenth year.

My mother, whose affection for me was boundless, notwithstanding her hopes of my forming an alliance that would be productive of felicity, still felt the most severe pain at the thought of our approaching separation. She was estranged from her husband's affections; she had treasured up all her fondest hopes in the society of an only daughter; she knew that no earthly pleasure can compensate for the loss of that sweet sympathy which is the bond of union betwixt child and parent.

Her regrets were as infinite as they were evident, and Mr. Robinson, in order to remove any obstacle which this consideration might throw in the way of our marriage, voluntarily proposed that she should reside with us. He represented me as too young and inexperienced to superintend domestic concerns; and while he flattered my mother's *amour propre,* he rather requested her aid as a sacrifice to his interest than as an obligation conferred on her.

The banns were published three successive Sundays at St. Martin's Church, and the day was fixed for our marriage,—the twelfth of April. It was not till all preliminaries were adjusted that Mr. Robinson, with much apparent agitation, suggested the necessity of keeping our union a secret. I was astonished at the proposal; but two reasons were given for his having made it, both of which seemed plausible; the first was, that Mr. Robinson had still three months to serve before his articles to Messrs. Vernon and Elderton expired; and the second was, the hope which a young lady entertained of forming a matrimonial union with Mr. Robinson as soon as that period should arrive. The latter reason alarmed me, but I was most solemnly assured that all the affection was cherished on the lady's part; that Mr. Robinson was particularly averse to the idea of such a marriage, and that as soon as he should become of age his independence would place him beyond the control of any person whatsoever.

I now proposed deferring our wedding-day till that period. I pleaded that I thought myself too young to encounter the cares and important duties of domestic life; I shrunk from the idea of everything clandestine, and anticipated a thousand ill consequences that might attend on a concealed marriage.

My scruples only seemed to increase Mr. Robinson's impatience for that ceremony which should make me his forever. He represented to my mother the disapprobation which my father would not fail to evince at my adopting a theatrical life in preference to engaging in an honorable and prosperous connection. He so powerfully worked upon the credulity of my beloved parent that she became a decided convert to his opinions. My youth, my person, he represented as the destined snares for my honor on a public stage, where all the attractions of the mimic scene would combine to render me a fascinating object. He also persuaded her that my health would suffer by the fatigues and exertions of the profession, and that probably I might be induced to marry some man who would not approve of a mother's forming a part in our domestic establishment.

My appearance on the stage had been put off from time to time, till Mr. Garrick became impatient, and desired my mother to allow of his fixing the night of important trial. It was now that Mr. Robinson and my mother united in persuading me to relinquish my project; and so perpetually, during three days, was I tormented on the subject, so ridiculed for having permitted the banns to be published, and afterward hesitating to fulfill my contract, that I consented—and was married.

As soon as the day of my wedding was fixed, it was deemed necessary that a total revolution should take place in my external appearance. I had till that period worn the habit of a child, and the dress of a woman, so suddenly assumed, sat rather awkwardly upon me. Still, so juvenile was my appearance, that, even two years after my union with Mr. Robinson, I was always accosted with the appellation of "Miss" whenever I entered a shop or was in company with strangers. My manners were no less childish than my appearance; only three months before I became a wife I had dressed a doll, and such was my dislike to the idea of a matrimonial alliance that the only circumstance which induced me to marry was that of being still permitted to reside with my mother, and to live separated, at least for some time, from my husband.

My heart, even when I knelt at the altar, was as free from any tender impression as it had been at the moment of my

birth. I knew not the sensation of any sentiment beyond that of esteem; love was still a stranger to my bosom. I had never, then, seen the being who was destined to inspire a thought which might influence my fancy or excite an interest in my mind, and I well remember that, even while I was pronouncing the marriage vow, my fancy involuntarily wandered to that scene where I had hoped to support myself with *éclat* and reputation.

The ceremony was performed by Doctor Saunders, the venerable vicar of St. Martin's, who, at the conclusion of the ceremony, declared that he had never before performed the office for so young a bride. The clerk officiated as father; my mother and the woman who opened the pews were the only witnesses to the union. I was dressed in the habit of a Quaker,—a society to which, in early youth, I was particularly partial. From the church we repaired to the house of a female friend, where a splendid breakfast was waiting; I changed my dress to one of white muslin, a chip hat adorned with white ribbons, a white sarsnet scarf-cloak, and slippers of white satin embroidered with silver. I mention these trifling circumstances because they lead to some others of more importance.

From the house of my mother's friend we set out for the inn at Maidenhead Bridge, Mr. Robinson and myself in a phaeton, my mother in a post-chaise; we were also accompanied by a gentleman by the name of Balack, a very intimate acquaintance and schoolfellow of my husband, who was not apprised of our wedding, but who nevertheless considered Mr. Robinson as my avowed suitor.

On his first seeing me, he remarked that I was "dressed like a bride." The observation overwhelmed me with confusion. During the day I was more than pensive,—I was melancholy; I considered all that had passed as a vision, and would scarcely persuade myself that the union which I had permitted to be solemnized was indissoluble. My mother frequently remarked my evident chagrin; and in the evening, while we strolled together in the garden which was opposite the inn, I told her, with a torrent of tears, the vouchers of my sincerity, that I was the most wretched of mortals! that I felt the most perfect esteem for Mr. Robinson, but that, according to my ideas of

domestic happiness, there should be a warm and powerful union of soul, to which I was yet totally a stranger.

During my absence from town, a letter was written to Mr. Garrick, informing him that an advantageous marriage (for my mother considered Mr. Robinson as the legal heir to a handsome fortune, together with an estate in South Wales) had induced me to relinquish my theatrical prospects; and a few weeks after, meeting Mr. Garrick in the street, he congratulated me on my union, and expressed the warmest wishes for my future happiness.

The day after our marriage, Mr. Robinson proposed dining at Henley-upon-Thames. My mother would not venture in the phaeton, and Mr. Balack occupied the place which was declined by her. On taking his seat between Robinson and myself, he remarked, "Were you married, I should think of the holy anathema,—Cursed is he that parteth man and wife." My countenance was suddenly suffused with the deepest scarlet; I cautiously concealed the effect which his remarks had produced, and we proceeded on our journey.

Descending a steep hill, betwixt Maidenhead Thicket and Henley, we met a drove of oxen. The comic opera of the "Padlock" was then in high celebrity, and our facetious little friend a second time disconcerted me by saying, in the words of Don Diego, "I don't like oxen, I wish they had been a flock of sheep!" I now began to discover the variety of unpleasant sensations which, even undesignedly, must arise from conversation, in the presence of those who were clandestinely married. I also trembled with apprehension, lest anything disgraceful should attach itself to my fame, by being seen under doubtful circumstances in the society of Mr. Robinson.

The stated time of concealment elapsed, and still my husband was perpetually at chambers in Lincoln's Inn. Still he was evidently under the control of his articles, and still desirous that our marriage should be kept a secret. My mother began to feel a considerable degree of inquietude upon the subject; particularly as she was informed that Mr. Robinson was not exactly in that state of expectation which he had represented. She found that he was already of age, and that he had still some months to serve of his clerkship.

She also heard that he was not the nephew and heir, but the illegitimate son of the man from whom he expected a handsome fortune; though he had an elder brother, now Commodore William Robinson, who was then in India, reaping the fruits of his industry under the generous patronage of Lord Clive.

It was now for the first time that my mother repented the influence she had used in promoting our union. She informed Mr. Robinson that she apprehended some gross deception on his part, and that she would no longer consent to our marriage being kept a secret. The reputation of a darling child, she alleged, was at stake; and though during a few weeks the world might have been kept in ignorance of my marriage, some circumstances that had transpired, now rendered an immediate disclosure absolutely necessary.

Mr. Robinson, finding my mother inexorable, resolved on setting out for Wales, in order to avow our marriage, and to present me to his "uncle," for such he still obstinately denominated his father. My mother wished to avail herself of this opportunity to visit her friends at Bristol, and accordingly we set out on the journey. We passed through Oxford; visited the different colleges; proceeded to Blenheim, and made the tour a tour of pleasure, with the hope of soothing my mother's resentment, and exhilarating my spirits, which were now perpetually dejected. I cannot help mentioning that, shortly after my marriage, I formed an acquaintance with a young lady, whose mind was no less romantic than my own, and while Mr. Robinson was occupied at chambers, we almost daily passed our morning hours in Westminster Abbey. It was to me a soothing and a gratifying scene of meditation. I have often remained in the gloomy chapels of that sublime fabric till I became, as it were, an inhabitant of another world. The dim light of the Gothic windows, the vibration of my footsteps along the lofty aisles, the train of reflections that the scene inspired, were all suited to the temper of my soul; and the melancholy propensities of my earliest infancy seemed to revive with an instinctive energy, which rendered them the leading characteristics of my existence. Indeed, the world has mistaken the character of my mind; I have ever been the reverse of volatile and dissipated. I mean

not to write my own eulogy, though with the candid and sensitive mind I shall, I trust, succeed in my complete vindication.

On our arrival at Bristol, Mr. Robinson thought it most advisable to proceed toward Tregunter, the seat of his "uncle," alone, in order to prepare him for my cordial reception, or to avoid the mortification I should experience, should he refuse to sanction our union. Mr. Robinson left me a few guineas, and promised that his absence should be short, and his affection increasing.

I had now been married near four months; and, though love was not the basis of my fidelity, honor, and a refined sense of feminine rectitude, attached me to the interest as well as to the person of my husband. I considered chastity as the brightest ornament that could embellish the female mind, and I regulated my conduct to that tenor which has principle more than affection to strengthen its progress.

At Bristol my mother experienced the most gratifying reception; all her former friends rejoiced to see her; I was invited daily to feasts of hospitality, and I found that fortune was to common minds a never failing passport. Mr. Robinson was represented as a young man of considerable expectations, and his wife was consequently again received as the daughter of Mr. Darby. The house in which I first opened my eyes to this world of sorrow, the minster, its green, the schoolhouse where I had passed many days, the tomb of my lost relatives in the church of St. Augustine, were all visited by me with a sweet and melancholy interest. But the cathedral, the brass eagle in the middle aisle, under which, when an infant, I used to sit and join in the loud anthem, or chant the morning service, most sensibly attached me. I longed again to occupy my place beneath its expanding wings, and once I went before the service began to gratify my inclination.

Language cannot describe the sort of sensation which I felt when I heard the well-known, long-remembered organ flinging its loud peal through the Gothic structure. I hastened to the cloisters. The nursery windows were dim and shattered; the house was sinking to decay. The moldering walk was gloomy, and my spirits were depressed beyond description: I stood alone, rapt in meditation. "Here," said I, "did my

infant feet pace to and fro; here did I climb the long stone bench, and swiftly measure it at the peril of my safety. On those dark and winding steps did I sit and listen to the full-toned organ, the loud anthem, and the bell which called the parishioners to prayer." I entered the cathedral once more; I read and re-read the monumental inscriptions; I paused upon the grave of Powell; I dropped a tear on the small square ground tablet which bore the name of Evelyn. Ah! how little has the misjudging world known of what has passed in my mind, even in the apparently gayest moments of my existence! How much have I regretted that ever I was born, even when I have been surrounded with all that could gratify the vanity of woman!

Mr. Robinson, on his arrival at Tregunter, dispatched a letter informing me that his "uncle" seemed disposed to act handsomely, but that he had only ventured to avow an intention to marry, fearful of abruptly declaring that he had been already some months a husband. Mr. Harris, for that was the name of my father-in-law, replied that "he hoped the object of his choice was not too young!" At this question Mr. Robinson was somewhat disconcerted. "A young wife," continued Mr. Harris, "cannot mend a man's fortune. How old is the girl you have chosen?"

"She is nearly seventeen!"

I was then only fifteen and a few months.[5]

"I hope she is not handsome," was the second observation. "You say she is not rich; and beauty without money is but a dangerous sort of portion."

"Will you see her?"

"I have no objection," said Mr. Harris.

"She is now with her mother at Bristol,—for," continued Mr. Robinson, with some hesitation, "she is my wife."

Mr. Harris paused, and then replied, "Well! stay with me only a few days, and then you shall fetch her. If the thing is done, it cannot be undone. She is a gentlewoman, you say, and I can have no reason to refuse seeing her."

The same letter which contained this intelligence also re-

[5] At the time when the banns of her marriage were published she admits to being "a few months advanced in her sixteenth year;" and she had been four months married when the journey to Bristol was made.

quested me to prepare for my journey, and desired me to write to a person whom Mr. Robinson named in London, and whom I had seen in his company, for a sum of money which would be necessary for our journey. This person was Mr. John King, then a money-broker in Goodman's Fields; but I was an entire stranger to the transaction which rendered him the temporary source of my husband's finances.

One or two letters passed on this subject, and I waited anxiously for my presentation at Tregunter. At length the period of Mr. Robinson's return arrived, and we set out together, while my mother remained with her friends at Bristol. Crossing the old passage to Chepstow in an open boat, a distance, though not extended, extremely perilous, we found the tide so strong and the night so boisterous that we were apprehensive of much danger. The rain poured and the wind blew tempestuously. The boat was full of passengers, and at one end of it were placed a drove of oxen. My terror was infinite; I considered this storm as an ill omen, but little thought at future periods of my life I should have cause to regret that I had not perished!

Mr. Harris came out to receive me. I wore a dark claret-colored riding-habit, with a white beaver hat and feathers. He embraced me with excessive cordiality, while Miss Robinson, my husband's sister, with cold formality led me into the house. I never shall forget her looks or her manner. Had her brother presented the most abject being to her, she could not have taken my hand with a more frigid demeanor. Miss Robinson, though not more than twenty years of age, was Gothic in her appearance and stiff in her deportment; she was of low stature and clumsy, with a countenance peculiarly formed for the expression of sarcastic vulgarity—a short snub nose, turned up at the point, a head thrown back with an air of *hauteur;* a gaudy-colored chintz gown, a thrice-bordered cap, with a profusion of ribbons, and a countenance somewhat more ruddy than was consistent with even pure health, presented the personage whom I was to know as my future companion and kinswoman!

Mr. Harris looked like a venerable Hawthorn; a brown fustian coat, a scarlet waistcoat edged with narrow gold, a pair of woolen spatter-dashes, and a gold-laced hat, formed

the dress he generally wore. He always rode a small Welsh pony, and was seldom in the house, except at eating-time, from sunrise to the close of the evening.

There was yet another personage in the domestic establishment, who was by Mr. Harris regarded as of no small importance: this was a venerable housekeeper of the name of Mary Edwards. Mrs. Molly was the female Mentor of the family; she dined at the table with Mr. Harris; she was the governess of the domestic department; and a more overbearing, vindictive spirit never inhabited the heart of mortal than that which pervaded the soul of the ill-natured Mrs. Molly.

I soon became a considerable favorite of "the squire," but I did not find any yielding qualities about the hearts of Miss Betsy or Mrs. Molly. They observed me with jealous eyes; they considered me as an interloper, whose manners attracted Mr. Harris's esteem, and who was likely to diminish their divided influence in the family. I found them daily growing weary of my society; I perceived their sidelong glances when I was complimented by the visiting neighbors on my good looks or taste in the choice of my dresses. Miss Robinson rode on horseback in a camlet safeguard, with a high-crowned bonnet; I wore a fashionable habit, and looked like something human. Envy at length assumed the form of insolence, and I was taunted perpetually on the folly of appearing like a woman of fortune; that a lawyer's wife had no right to dress like a duchess; and that, though I might be very accomplished, a good housewife had no occasion for harpsichords and books, —they belonged to women who brought wherewithal to support them.

Knowing that Mr. Harris was disposed to think favorably of me,—that he even declared he should "have liked me for his wife, had I not married Tom," though he was then between sixty and seventy years of age, I thought it most prudent to depart, lest, through the machinations of Miss Betsy and Mrs. Molly, I should lose the share I had gained in his affections. My mother was still at Bristol; and the morning of our departure being arrived, to my infinite astonishment Mr. Harris proposed accompanying us thither. It was in vain that Molly and Miss interfered to prevent him; he swore that

he would see me safe across the channel, whatever might be the consequence of his journey. We set out together.

On our arrival at Bristol, Mr. Harris was presented to my mother, and by her introduced to many respectable friends. He was consequently invited to several dinner-parties. I was his idol; he would dance with me; when he had taken the evening draught, he would sing with me, and I was to him the most delightful of beings. Many embellishments for Tregunter House were submitted to my taste and choice; and I remember, on his giving orders for the marble chimney-pieces, he said, "Choose them as you like them, Mrs. Robinson, for they are all for you and Tom when I am no more." Indeed, he frequently assured me, while I was at Tregunter, that the estate should be my husband's.

After passing many days at Bristol Mr. Harris returned to Wales, and our party set out for London. Mr. Robinson's mind was easy, and his hopes were confirmed by the kindness of his "uncle"; he now considered himself the most happy of mortals. We removed from Great Queen Street to a house, No. 13, in Hatton Garden, which had been recently built. Mr. Robinson hired it, and furnished it with peculiar elegance. I frequently inquired into the extent of his finances, and he as often assured me that they were in every respect competent to his expenses. In addition to our domestic establishment, Mr. Robinson purchased a handsome phaeton, with saddle-horses for his own use; and I now made my début, though scarcely emerged beyond the boundaries of childhood, in the broad hemisphere of fashionable folly.

A new face, a young person dressed with peculiar but simple elegance, was sure to attract attention at places of public entertainment. The first time I went to Ranelagh, my habit was so singularly plain and Quaker-like that all eyes were fixed upon me. I wore a gown of light brown lustring with close round cuffs (it was then the fashion to wear long ruffles); my hair was without powder, and my head adorned with a plain round cap and a white chip hat, without any ornaments whatever.

The second place of polite entertainment to which Mr. Robinson accompanied me was the Pantheon concert, then the most fashionable assemblage of the gay and the distin-

guished. At this place it was customary to appear much dressed; large hoops and high feathers were universally worn. My habit was composed of pale pink satin, trimmed with broad sable; my dear mother presented me a suit of rich and valuable point lace, which she had received from my father as a birthday gift, and I was at least some hours employed in decorating my person for this new sphere of fascination; I say some hours, because my shape at that period required some arrangement, owing to the visible increase of my domestic solicitudes.

As soon as I entered the Pantheon rotunda, I never shall forget the impression which my mind received; the splendor of the scene, the dome illuminated with variegated lamps, the music, and the beauty of the women, seemed to present a circle of enchantment. I recollect that the most lovely of fair forms met my eyes in that of Lady Almeria Carpenter. The countenance which most pleased me was that of the late Mrs. Baddeley. The first Countess of Tyrconnel also appeared with considerable *éclat*. But the buzz of the room, the unceasing murmur of admiration, attended the Marchioness Townshend. I took my seat on a sofa nearly opposite to that on which she was sitting, and I observed two persons, evidently men of fashion, speaking to her, till one of them, looking toward me, with an audible voice inquired of the other, "Who is she?"

Their fixed stare disconcerted me; I rose, and, leaning on my husband's arm, again mingled in the brilliant circle. The inquirers followed us; stopping several friends, as we walked around the circle, and repeatedly demanding of them, "Who is that young lady in the pink dress trimmed with sable?" My manner and confusion plainly evinced that I was not accustomed to the gaze of impertinent high breeding. I felt uneasy, and proposed returning home, when I perceived that our two followers were joined by a third, who, on looking at me, said, "I think I know her." It was the late Earl of Northington.

We had now to pass the group in order to quit the rotunda. Lord Northington, leaving his companions, approached me. "Miss Darby, or I am mistaken," said he, with a bow of marked civility. I replied that my name was now

changed to that of Robinson, and, to prevent any awkward embarrassment, presented my husband, on whose arm I was still leaning. Lord Northington continued to walk around the Pantheon with us, made many inquiries after my father, complimented me on the improvement of my person, and "hoped that he should be permitted to pay his respects to Mr. and Mrs. Robinson."

We now entered the tea-room; there was not a seat vacant; I was considerably fatigued, and somewhat faint with the heat of the rotunda. I quitted the tea-room, and seated myself on a sofa near the door. In a few minutes Lord Northington brought me a cup of tea, for Mr. Robinson did not like to leave me alone, and at the same time presented his two inquisitive friends, Lord Lyttelton and Captain Ayscough.[6]

I now proposed departing. Mr. Robinson accompanied me to the vestibule, and while he was seeking the carriage Lord Lyttelton offered his services. I had never till that evening heard his name, but there was an easy effrontery in his address that completely disgusted, while his determined gaze distressed and embarrassed me, and I felt inexpressible satisfaction when Mr. Robinson returned to tell me that the carriage was ready.

On the following morning Lords Northington, Lyttelton, and Colonel Ayscough made their visits of ceremony. Mr. Robinson was not at home, but I received them, though not without some embarrassment. I was yet a child, and wholly

[6] Thomas, second Baron Lyttelton, known as "the wicked Lord Lyttelton," in distinction to his father, who in his lifetime had been styled, "the good Lord Lyttelton." Thomas, Baron Lyttelton, was a man of parts and fashion; a politician, a writer of verses, an artist whose paintings were supposed to contain the combined excellencies of Salvator Rosa and Claude, and withal one of the greatest profligates of the age. This is the Lord Lyttelton who, in his thirty-fifth year, and whilst in perfect health, dreamt a woman appeared to him and announced he had not three days to live. He spoke lightly of his dream, and on the morning of the third day felt in such good spirits that he declared he should "bilk the ghost." He died suddenly that night, when his friend Miles Peter Andrews dreamt Lyttelton appeared to him and said, "All is over."

George Edward Ayscough, a captain in the Guards, was cousin to the second Lord Lyttelton. Some years later than the date of his meeting with Mrs. Robinson he produced a version of Voltaire's "Semiramis," which was presented at Drury Lane Theater in 1776. He is described as "a parasite of Lord Lyttleton," and as "a fool of fashion."

unacquainted with the manners of the world; yet, young as I was, I became the traveler of its mazy and perilous paths. At an age when girls are generally at school, or indeed scarcely emancipated from the nursery, I was presented in society as a wife—and very nearly as a mother.

Lord Lyttelton, who was perhaps the most accomplished libertine that any age or country has produced, with considerable artifice inquired after Mr. Robinson, professed his earnest desire to cultivate his acquaintance, and, on the following day, sent him a card of invitation. Lyttelton was an adept in the artifices of fashionable intrigue. He plainly perceived that both Mr. Robinson and myself were uninitiated in its mysteries; he knew that to undermine a wife's honor he must become master of the husband's confidence, and Mr. Robinson was too much pleased with the society of a man whose wit was only equaled by his profligacy, to shrink from such an association.

Fortunately for me, Lord Lyttelton was uniformly my aversion. His manners were overbearingly insolent, his language licentious, and his person slovenly even to a degree that was disgusting. Mr. Robinson was in every respect the very reverse of his companion: he was unassuming, neat, and delicate in his conversation. I had not a wish to descend from the propriety of wedded life, and I abhorred, decidedly abhorred, the acquaintance with Lord Lyttelton.

In the course of a few days his lordship presented me the works of Miss Aitken (now Mrs. Barbauld). I read them with rapture. I thought them the most beautiful poems I had ever seen, and considered the woman who could invent such poetry as the most to be envied of human creatures. Lord Lyttelton had some taste for poetical compositions, and wrote verses with considerable facility.

On the following Monday I again visited the Pantheon. My dress was then white and silver. Again I was followed with attention. Lord Lyttelton was my *cavaliere servente* that evening, though, as usual, his chief attention was paid to Mr. Robinson. During the concert he presented the Count de Belgeioso, the imperial ambassador, one of the most accomplished foreigners I ever remember having met with. Lord Valentia was also introduced, but as his lordship had

recently made some *éclat* by his attentions to the celebrated Mrs. Elliot, I rather avoided than wished to cultivate his acquaintance.

Among my female friends, those for whom I entertained the strongest esteem were Lady Yea, the wife of Sir William Yea, and the sister of Sir John Trevellyan. She was a lovely and accomplished woman. Mrs. Parry, the wife of the Rev. Doctor Parry, and the author of "Eden Vale," a novel, was also one of my most favorite acquaintances. Mrs. Parry was a woman of considerable talents, a wit, and of remarkably pleasing manners.

Of those who frequented our house Lord Lyttelton was most decidedly my abhorrence; I knew that he frequently led my husband from the paths of domestic confidence to the haunts of profligate debasement. Toward me his lordship affected great indifference. He has even in my presence declared that no woman under thirty years of age was worth admiring; that even the antiquity of forty was far preferable to the insipidity of sixteen; and he generally concluded his observations by hoping he had not made "the pretty child angry."

I soon discovered that his intercourse with Lord Lyttelton produced a very considerable change in Mr. Robinson's domestic deportment. They were constantly together, and the neglect which I experienced began to alarm me. I dedicated all my leisure hours to poetry; I wrote verses of all sorts; and Mr. Robinson having mentioned that I had proposed appearing on the stage, previous to my marriage, in the character of Cordelia, Lord Lyttelton facetiously christened me the Poetess Corry.

It was with extreme regret, and frequently with uncontrollable indignation, that I endured the neglect of my husband and the tauntings of the profligate Lyttelton. "The child"—for so he generally called me—was deserted for the society of the most libertine men and the most abandoned women. Mr. Robinson became not only careless of his wife, but of his pecuniary finances, while I was kept in total ignorance as to the resources which supported his increasing expenses.

Among my other friends, Lady Yea frequently inquired

by what means my husband supported his household disbursements. Our table was elegantly, though not profusely, served. Mr. Robinson seldom attended to his profession, and I was too young, as well as too inexperienced, to look after family affairs. My younger brother George, whom, upon my marriage, Mr. Robinson and myself adopted as our own, now finding his health impaired, my mother attended him at Bristol, so that I had no friend to advise me who felt any real interest in my welfare. Dress, parties, adulation, occupied all my hours. Mr. Robinson's easy temper was influenced by the counsel of his friend Lyttelton, and he every hour sank deeper and deeper in the gulf of dissipation and extravagance.

Among the most dangerous of my husband's associates was George Robert Fitzgerald. His manners toward women were interesting and attentive. He perceived the neglect with which I was treated by Mr. Robinson, and the pernicious influence which Lord Lyttelton had acquired over his mind; he professed to feel the warmest interest in my welfare, lamented the destiny which had befallen me in being wedded to a man incapable of estimating my value, and at last confessed himself my most ardent and devoted admirer. I shuddered at the declaration, for, amidst all the allurements of splendid folly, my mind, the purity of my virtue, was still uncontaminated.

I repulsed the dangerous advances of this accomplished person, but I did not the less feel the humiliation to which a husband's indifference had exposed me. God can bear witness to the purity of my soul, even surrounded by temptations and mortified by neglect. Whenever I ventured to inquire into pecuniary resources, Mr. Robinson silenced me by saying that he was independent; added to this assurance, Lord Lyttelton repeatedly promised that, through his courtly interest, he would very shortly obtain for my husband some honorable and lucrative situation.

I confess that I reposed but little confidence in the promises of such a man, though my husband believed them inviolable. Frequent parties were made at his lordship's house in Hill Street, and many invitations pressed for a visit to his seat at Hagley. These I peremptorily refused, till the noble

hypocrite became convinced of my aversion, and adopted a new mode of pursuing his machinations.

One forenoon Lord Lyttelton called in Hatton Garden, as was almost his daily custom, and, on finding that Mr. Robinson was not at home, requested to speak with me on business of importance. I found him seemingly much distressed. He informed me that he had a secret to communicate of considerable moment both to my interest and happiness. I started.

"Nothing, I trust in Heaven, has befallen my husband!" said I, with a voice scarcely articulate.

Lord Lyttelton hesitated.

"How little does that husband deserve the solicitude of such a wife!" said he; "but," continued his lordship, "I fear that I have in some degree aided in alienating his conjugal affections. I could not bear to see such youth, such merit, so sacrificed—"

"Speak briefly, my lord," said I.

"Then," replied Lord Lyttelton, "I must inform you that your husband is the most false and undeserving of that name! He has formed a connection with a woman of abandoned character; he lavishes on her those means of subsistence which you will shortly stand in need of."

"I do not believe it," said I, indignantly.

"Then you shall be convinced," answered his lordship; "but remember, if you betray me, your true and zealous friend, I must fight your husband; for he never will forgive my having discovered his infidelity."

"It cannot be true," said I. "You have been misinformed."

"Then it has been by the woman who usurps your place in the affections of your husband," replied Lord Lyttelton. "From her I received the information. Her name is Harriet Wilmot; she resides in Soho. Your husband daily visits her."

I thought I should have fainted; but a torrent of tears recalled the ebbing current of my heart, and I grew proud in fortitude, though humbled in self-love.

"Now, said Lord Lyttelton, "if you are a woman of spirit, you will be *revenged!*" I shrunk with horror, and would have quitted the room. "Hear me," said he. "You cannot

be a stranger to my motives for thus cultivating the friendship of your husband. My fortune is at your disposal. Robinson is a ruined man; his debts are considerable, and nothing but destruction can await you. Leave him! Command my powers to serve you."

I would hear no more,—broke from him, and rushed out of the apartments. My sensations, my sufferings were indescribable.

I immediately took a hackney-coach, and proceeded to Prince's Street, Soho,—Lord Lyttelton having given me the address of my rival. Language cannot describe what I suffered till I arrived at the lodgings of Miss Wilmot. The coachman knocked, a dirty servant girl opened the door. Her mistress was not at home. I quitted the coach and ascended to the drawing-room, where the servant left me, after informing me that Miss W. would return in a very short time. I was now left alone.

I opened the chamber door which led from the drawing-room. A new white lustring sacque and petticoat lay on the bed. While I was examining the room, a loud knocking at the street door alarmed me. I reëntered the front apartment, and waited with a palpitating bosom till the being whose triumph had awakened both my pride and my resentment appeared before me.

She was a handsome woman, though evidently some years older than myself. She wore a dress of printed Irish muslin, with a black gauze cloak and a chip hat, trimmed with pale lilac ribbons; she was tall, and had a very pleasing countenance. Her manner was timid and confused; her lips as pale as ashes. I commiserated her distress, desired her not to be alarmed, and we took our seats, with increased composure.

"I came to inquire whether or not you are acquainted with a Mr. Robinson," said I.

"I am," replied Miss Wilmot. "He visits me frequently." She drew off her glove as she spoke, and passing her hand over her eyes, I observed on her finger a ring, which I knew to have been my husband's.

"I have nothing more to say," added I, "but to request that you will favor me with Mr. Robinson's address; I have something which I wish to convey to him."

She smiled, and cast her eyes over my figure. My dress was a morning *déshabillé* of India muslin, with a bonnet of straw, and a white lawn cloak bordered with lace.

"You are Mr. Robinson's wife," said she, with a trembling voice. "I am sure you are; and probably this ring was yours; pray receive it—"

I declined taking the ring. She continued, "Had I known that Mr. Robinson was the husband of such a woman—"

I rose to leave her. She added, "I never will see him more, —unworthy man,—I never will again receive him."

I could make no reply, but rose and departed.

On my return to Hatton Garden, I found my husband waiting dinner. I concealed my chagrin. We had made a party that evening to Drury Lane Theater, and from thence to a select concert at the Count de Belgeioso's, in Portman Square. Lord Lyttelton was to join us at both places. We went to the play; but my agitation had produced such a violent headache that I was obliged to send an apology for not keeping our engagement at the imperial ambassador's.

On the following morning I spoke to Mr. Robinson respecting Miss Wilmot. He did not deny that he knew such a person, that he had visited her; but he threw all the blame of his indiscretion on Lord Lyttelton. He requested to know who had informed me of his conduct. I refused to tell; and he had too high an opinion of his false associate to suspect him of such treachery.

At one of Mrs. Parry's card parties I met Mrs. Abington.[7] I thought her the most lively and bewitching woman I had ever seen; her manners were fascinating, and the peculiar tastefulness of her dress excited universal admiration. My imagination again wandered to the stage, and I thought the heroine of the scenic art was of all human creatures the most to be envied.

Mr. Robinson's mornings were devoted to the money-lenders, his evenings to his fashionable associates; but my hours were all dedicated to sorrow, for I now heard that my husband, even at the period of his marriage, had an attachment

[7] Mrs. Abington, a distinguished actress who, at the age of seventeen, had made her first appearance at the Haymarket Theater, some six years before the author of these memoirs was born.

which he had not broken, and that his infidelities were as public as the ruin of his finances was inevitable. I remonstrated—I was almost frantic. My distress was useless, my wishes to retrench our expenses ineffectual. Mr. Robinson had, previous to our union, deeply involved himself in a bond debt of considerable magnitude, and he had from time to time borrowed money on annuity,—one sum to discharge the other,—till every plan of liquidation appeared impracticable. During all this time my mother was at Bristol.

Lord Lyttelton, finding every plan of seduction fail, now rested his only hope of subduing my honor in the certainty of my husband's ruin. He therefore took every step, embraced every opportunity of involving him more deeply in calamity. Parties were made to Richmond and Salt Hill, to Ascot Heath and Epsom races, in all of which Mr. Robinson bore his share of expense, with the addition of post-horses. Whenever he seemed to shrink from his augmenting indiscretion, Lord Lyttelton assured him that, through his interest, an appointment of honorable and pecuniary importance should be obtained, though I embraced every opportunity to assure his lordship that no consideration upon earth should ever make me the victim of his artifice.

Mr. Fitzgerald still paid me unremitting attention. His manners toward women were beautifully interesting. He frequently cautioned me against the libertine Lyttelton, and as frequently lamented the misguided confidence which Mr. Robinson reposed in him. Lord Lyttelton's shameless conduct toward an amiable wife, from whom he was separated, and his cruel neglect of a lady of the name of Dawson, who had long been attached to him, marked the unworthiness of his character. He was the very last man in the world for whom I ever could have entertained the smallest partiality; he was to me the most hateful of existing beings. Probably these pages will be read when the hand that writes them molders in the grave, when that God who judges all hearts will know how innocent I was of the smallest conjugal infidelity. I make this solemn asseveration because there have been malevolent spirits who, in the plenitude of their calumny, have slandered me by suspecting my fidelity even at this early period of my existence. These pages are the

pages of truth, unadorned by romance and unembellished by the graces of phraseology, and I know that I have been sufficiently the victim of events too well to become the tacit acquiescer where I have been grossly misrepresented. Alas! of all created beings, I have been the most severely subjugated by circumstances more than by inclination.

About this time a party was one evening made to Vauxhall. Mr. Fitzgerald was the person who proposed it, and it consisted of six or eight persons. The night was warm and the gardens crowded. We supped in the circle which has the statue of Handel in its center. The hour growing late,—or rather early in the morning,—our company dispersed, and no one remained excepting Mr. Robinson, Mr. Fitzgerald, and myself. Suddenly a noise was heard near the orchestra. A crowd had assembled, and two gentlemen were quarreling furiously. Mr. R. and Fitzgerald ran out of the box. I rose to follow them, but they were lost in the throng, and I thought it most prudent to resume my place, which I had just quitted, as the only certain way of their finding me in safety. In a moment Fitzgerald returned. "Robinson," said he, "is gone to seek you at the entrance-door. He thought you had quitted the box."

"I did for a moment," said I, "but I was fearful of losing him in the crowd, and therefore returned."

"Let me conduct you to the door; we shall certainly find him there," replied Mr. Fitzgerald. "I know that he will be uneasy."

I took his arm and we ran hastily toward the entrance-door on the Vauxhall Road.

Mr. Robinson was not there. We proceeded to look for our carriage. It stood at some disance. I was alarmed and bewildered. Mr. Fitzgerald hurried me along. "Don't be uneasy; we shall certainly find him," said he, "for I left him here not five minutes ago." As he spoke, he stopped abruptly. A servant opened a chaise door. There were four horses harnessed to it; and by the light of the lamps on the side of the footpath, I plainly perceived a pistol in the pocket of the door which was open. I drew back. Mr. Fitzgerald placed his arm around my waist, and endeavored to lift me up the step of the chaise, the servant watching at a little dis-

tance. I resisted, and inquired what he meant by such conduct. His hand trembled excessively, while he said, in a low voice, "Robinson can but fight me." I was terrified beyond all description. I made him loose his hold, and ran toward the entrance-door. Mr. Fitzgerald now perceived Mr. Robinson. "Here he comes!" exclaimed he, with easy nonchalance. "We had found the wrong carriage, Mr. Robinson. We have been looking after you, and Mrs. Robinson is alarmed beyond expression."

"I am, indeed!" said I. Mr. Robinson now took my hand. We stepped into the coach, and Mr. Fitzgerald followed. As we proceeded toward Hatton Garden, the sky incessantly flashed lightning. I was terrified by the combination of events, and I was in a situation which rendered any alarm peculiarly dangerous, for I was several months advanced in that state which afterward terminated by presenting to me my only child, my darling Maria.[8]

I had often heard of Mr. Fitzgerald's propensity to duelling. I recollected my own delicate situation; I valued my husband's safety. I therefore did not mention the adventure of the evening, particularly as Mr. Fitzgerald observed, on our way to Hatton Garden, that he had "nearly made a strange mistake, and taken possession of another person's carriage." This remark appeared so plausible that nothing further was said upon the subject.

From that evening I was particularly cautious in avoiding Fitzgerald. He was too daring and too fascinating a being to be allowed the smallest marks of confidence.

I was now known by name at every public place in and near the metropolis. Our circle of acquaintances enlarged daily. My friend Lady Yea was my constant companion. Mr. Robinson became desperate, from a thorough conviction that no effort of economy or professional labor could arrange his shattered finances, the large debt which he owed previous to his marriage with me having laid the foundation of every succeeding embarrassment.

The moment now approached when the arcanum was to be developed, and an execution on Mr. Robinson's effects, at

[8] Later she gave birth to a daughter, named Sophia, who lived but six weeks.

the suit of an annuitant, decided the doubts and fears which had long afflicted me. I was in a great degree prepared for this event by the evident inquietude of my husband's mind, and his frequent interviews with persons of a mysterious description. Indeed, this crisis seemed rather consolatory than appalling, for I hoped and trusted that the time was now arrived when reason would take place of folly, and experience point out those thorns which strew the pleasurable paths of dissipation.

At this period, had Mr. Harris generously assisted his son, I am fully and confidently persuaded that he would have pursued a discreet and regular line of conduct. His first involvement was the basis of all his misfortunes. The impossibility of liquidating that debt (the motive for which it was contracted is to this hour unknown to me) rendered him desperate.[9]

From Hatton Garden we removed to a house which was lent to us by a friend at Finchley. Here I hoped at least to remain tranquil till the perilous moment was passed which was to render me a mother. I here devoted my time to making my infant's little wardrobe; my finest muslin dresses I converted into frocks and robes, with my lace I fondly trimmed them. It was a sweetly pleasing task, and I often smiled when I reflected that only three years before this period I had dressed with my own hands a waxen doll nearly as large as a new-born infant.

Mr. Robinson had much business to transact in London, and I was almost perpetually alone at Finchley. Of our domestic establishment there was only one who did not desert us, and he was a negro!—one of that despised, degraded race, who wear the color on their features which too often characterizes the hearts of their fair and unfeeling oppressors. I have found, during my journey through life, that the two male domestics who were most attached to my interest and most faithful to my fortunes were both negroes!

My mother now returned from Bristol, and I had the consolation of her society. I divided my time betwixt reading, writing, and making a little wardrobe for my expected dar-

[9] Mr. Robinson was educated at Harrow, and was a contemporary of Mr. Sheridan.

ling. I little regretted the busy scenes of life; I sighed not for public attention.

Mr. Robinson, finding his creditors inexorable, and fearing that he might endanger his personal liberty by remaining near London, informed me that I must, in a few days, accompany him to Tregunter. I felt a severe pang in the idea of quitting my adored mother at a moment when I should stand so much in need of a parent's attentions. My agony was extreme. I fancied that I never should behold her more; that the harshness and humiliating taunts of my husband's kindred would send me prematurely to the grave; that my infant would be left among strangers, and that my mother would scarcely have fortitude sufficient to survive me. Then I anticipated the inconvenience of so long a journey, for Tregunter House was within a few miles of Brecon. I dreaded to encounter the scornful vulgarity and the keen glances of Miss Betsy and Mrs. Molly. I considered all these things with horror; but the propriety of wedded life commanded the sacrifice, and I readily consented to make it.

We set out for Tregunter. On our arrival there, I instantly perceived that our misfortunes had outstripped our speed. Miss Robinson scarcely bade us welcome, and Molly was peevish, even to insulting displeasure.

Mr. Harris was from home when we arrived. But he returned shortly after. His greeting was harsh and unfeeling. "Well! so you have escaped from a prison, and now you are come here to do penance for your follies? Well! and what do you want?" I could not reply. I entered the house, and instantly hastened to my old chamber, where my tears gave relief to that heart which was almost bursting with agony.

Still Mr. Robinson conjured me to bear his uncle's wayward temper patiently. I did, though every day I was taunted with idle and inhuman questions, such as, "How long do you think that I will support you? What is to become of you in a prison? What business have beggars to marry?" With many others, equally feeling, and high-minded!

One day, I particularly remember, Mr. Harris had invited a large party to dinner. John and Charles Morgan, Esqrs., members of Parliament, with an old clergyman of the name of Jones, and several others were present. I was

then within a fortnight of my perilous moment. One of the company expressed his satisfaction that I was come to give Tregunter a little stranger; and turning to Mr. Harris, added:

"You have just finished your house in time for a nursery."

"No, no," replied Mr. Harris, laughing, "they came here because prison doors were open to receive them."

I felt my face redden to scarlet; every person present seemed to sympathize in my chagrin, and I was near sinking under the table with confusion. Mr. Robinson's indignation was evident; but it was restrained by duty as well as by necessity.

The manor-house was not yet finished; and a few days after our arrival Mr. Harris informed me that he had no accommodation for my approaching confinement. Where was I to go? was the next question. After many family consultations, it was decided that I should remove to Trevecca House, about a mile and a half distant, and there give to this miserable world my first-born darling.

After my removal to Trevecca, I seldom saw Miss Robinson or Mrs. Molly; Mr. Harris never called on me, though I was not more than a mile and a half from Tregunter. At length the expected, though to me most perilous, moment arrived, which awoke a new and tender interest in my bosom, which presented to my fondly beating heart my child,—my Maria. I cannot describe the sensations of my soul at the moment when I pressed the little darling to my bosom, my maternal bosom; when I kissed its hands, its cheeks, its forehead, as it nestled closely to my heart, and seemed to claim that affection which has never failed to warm it. She was the most beautiful of infants! I thought myself the happiest of mothers; her first smile appeared like something celestial,—something ordained to irradiate my dark and dreary prospect of existence.

Two days after my child was presented to this world of sorrow, my nurse, Mrs. Jones, a most excellent woman, was earnestly desired by the people of the manufactory to bring the infant among them; they wished to see the "young squire's baby, the little heiress to Tregunter." It was in vain that I dreaded the consequences of the visit, for it was in the

month of October; but Mrs. Jones assured me that infants in that part of the world were very frequently carried into the open air on the day of their birth; she also hinted that my refusal would hurt the feelings of the honest people, and wear the semblance of pride more than of maternal tenderness. This idea decided my acquiescence; and my little darling, enveloped in the manufacture of her own romantic birthplace, made her first visit to her kind but unsophisticated countrywomen.

No sooner did Mrs. Jones enter the circle than she was surrounded by the gazing throng. The infant was dressed with peculiar neatness, and nothing mortal could appear more lovely. A thousand and a thousand blessings were heaped upon the "heiress of Tregunter," for so they fancifully called her; a thousand times did they declare that the baby was the very image of her father. Mrs. Jones returned to me; every word she uttered soothed my heart; a sweet and grateful glow, for the first time, bespoke the indescribable gratification which a fond parent feels in hearing the praises of a beloved offspring.

Amidst these sweet and never-to-be-forgotten sensations, Mr. Harris entered my chamber. He abruptly inquired how I found myself, and, seating himself by the side of my bed, began to converse on family affairs. I was too feeble to say much; and he had not the delicacy to consider that Mrs. Jones, my nurse, and almost a stranger to me, was a witness to our conversation.

"Well!" said Mr. Harris, "and what do you mean to do with your child?"

I made no answer.

"I will tell you," added he. "Tie it to your back and work for it."

I shivered with horror.

"Prison doors are open," continued Mr. Harris. "Tom will die in a jail; and what is to become of you?"

I remained silent.

Miss Robinson now made her visit. She looked at me without uttering a syllable; but while she contemplated my infant's features, her innocent sleeping face, her little dimpled hands folded on her breast, she murmured, "Poor little

wretch! Poor thing! It would be a mercy if it pleased God to take it!" My agony of mind was scarcely supportable.

About three weeks after this period, letters arrived, informing Mr. Robinson that his creditors were still inexorable, and that the place of his concealment was known. He was cautioned not to run the hazard of an arrest; indeed, he knew that such an event would complete his ruin with Mr. Harris, from whom he should not receive any assistance. He communicated this intelligence to me, and at the same time informed me that he must absolutely depart from Trevecca immediately. I was still extremely feeble, for my mental sufferings had impaired my corporeal strength almost as much as the perils I had recently encountered. But the idea of remaining at Trevecca without my husband was more terrible than the prospect of annihilation, and I replied, without a hesitating thought, "I am ready to go with you."

My good nurse, who was a very amiable woman, and under forty years of age, conjured me to delay my journey. She informed me that it would be dangerous to undertake it in my then weak state. My husband's liberty was in danger, and my life appeared of little importance; for even at that early period of my days I was already weary of existence.

On the succeeding morning we departed. Mrs. Jones insisted on accompanying me on the first day's journey. Mr. Robinson, my nurse, and myself occupied a post-chaise; my Maria was placed on a pillow on Mrs. Jones's lap. The paleness of death overspread my countenance, and the poor honest people of the mountains and the villages saw us depart with sorrow, though not without their blessings. Neither Mr. Harris nor the enlightened females of Tregunter expressed the smallest regret or solicitude on the occasion. We reached Abergavenny that evening. My little remaining strength was exhausted, and I could proceed no farther.

At Abergavenny I parted from Mrs. Jones, and, having no domestic with me, was left to take the entire charge of Maria. Reared in the tender lap of affluence, I had learnt but little of domestic occupation; the adorning part of education had been lavished, but the useful had never been bestowed upon a girl who was considered as born to independence. With these disadvantages, I felt very awkwardly situated, under

the arduous task I had to perform; but necessity soon prevailed, with the soft voice of maternal affection, and I obeyed her dictates as the dictates of nature.

On the following day we proceeded to Monmouth, where we resided about a month, when I was invited to a ball. My spirits and strength had been renovated by the change of scenery, and I was persuaded to dance. I was at that time particularly fond of the amusement, and my partial friends flattered me by saying that I measured the mazy figure like a sylph. I was at that period a nurse; and, during the evening, Maria was brought to an antechamber to receive the only support she had ever yet taken. Unconscious of the danger attendant on such an event, I gave her her accustomed nourishment immediately after dancing. It was agitated by the violence of exercise and the heat of the ballroom, and, on my return home, I found my infant in strong convulsions.

My distraction, my despair, was terrible; my state of mind rendered it impossible for me to afford any internal nourishment to the child, even when her little mouth was parched, or the fit in the smallest degree abated. I was little less than frantic; all the night I sat with her on my arms; an eminent medical man attended. The convulsions continued, and my situation was terrible; those who witnessed it cautiously avoided informing me that the peril of my infant proceeded from my dancing; had I known it at that period, I really believe I should have lost my senses.

In this desperate state, with only short intervals of rest, my darling continued till the morning. All my friends came to make inquiries, and, among others, a clergyman who visited at my grandmother's. He saw the child, as it was thought, expiring; he saw me still sitting where I had taken my place of despair on the preceding night, fixed in the stupor of unutterable affliction. He conjured me to let the child be removed. I was in a raging fever; the effects of not having nourished my child during twelve hours began to endanger my own existence, and I looked forward to my dissolution as the happiest event that could befall me.

Still Maria lay upon my lap, and still I resisted every attempt that was made to remove her. Just at this period the

clergyman recollected that he had seen one of his children relieved from convulsions by a simple experiment, and he requested my permission to try its effects. The child was given over by my medical attendant, and I replied, "However desperate the remedy, I conjure you to administer it."

He now mixed a tablespoonful of spirit of aniseed with a small quantity of spermaceti, and gave it to my infant. In a few minutes the convulsive spasms abated, and in less than an hour she sunk into a sweet and tranquil slumber. What I felt may be pictured to a fond mother's fancy, but my pen would fail in attempting to describe it.

Some circumstances now occurred which gave Mr. Robinson reason to believe that he was not safe at Monmouth, and we prepared for a removal to some other quarter. The day was fixed for commencing our journey, when an execution arrived for a considerable sum, and Mr. Robinson was no longer at liberty to travel. My alarm was infinite; the sum was too large for the possibility of liquidation, and, knowing Mr. Robinson's desperate fortune, I thought it unjust as well as ungenerous to attempt the borrowing of it. Fortunately the sheriff for the county was a friend of the family.

The matter was, however, arranged on an explanation taking place, and Mr. Robinson engaged a lodging near Berners Street, whither we repaired on the same evening. My little collection of poems, which I had arranged for publication, and which had been ready ever since my marriage, I now determined to print immediately. They were indeed trifles, very trifles; I have since perused them with a blush of self-reproof, and wondered how I could venture on presenting them to the public. I trust that there is not a copy remaining, excepting that which my dear, partial mother fondly preserved, and which is now in my possession.

I had been in town a few days, when some female friends persuaded me to accompany a party which they had formed to Ranelagh. Mr. Robinson declined going, but after much entreaty I consented. I had now been married near two years; my person was considerably improved; I was grown taller than when I became Mr. Robinson's wife, and I had now more the manners of a woman of the world than those

of girlish simplicity, which had hitherto characterized me, though I had been some months absent from London, and a part of them rusticated among mountains. The dress which I wore was plain and simple; it was composed of pale lilac lustring. My head had a wreath of white flowers; I was complimented on my looks by the whole party, and with little relish for public amusements, and a heart throbbing with domestic solicitude, I accompanied the party to Ranelagh.

The first person I saw, on entering the rotunda, was George Robert Fitzgerald. He started as if he had received a shock of electricity. I turned my head away, and would have avoided him; but he instantly quitted two friends with whom he was walking, and presented himself to me. He expressed great pleasure at seeing me once more in "the world;" was surprised at finding me for the first time in public without my husband, and requested permission to pay his respects to me at my house. I replied that I was "on a visit to some friends." He bowed, and rejoined his companions.

On the following noon I was correcting a proof-sheet of my volume, when the servant abruptly announced Mr. Fitzgerald!

I was somewhat disconcerted by this unexpected visit, and received Mr. Fitzgerald with a cold and embarrassed mien, which evidently mortified him; I also felt a little worldly vanity in the moment of surprise, for my morning dress was more calculated to display maternal assiduity than elegant and tasteful *déshabillé*. In a small basket near my chair slept my little Maria; my table was spread with papers, and everything around me presented the mixed confusion of a study and a nursery.

Mr. Fitzgerald said a thousand civil things; but that which charmed me, was the admiration my child. He declared that he had never seen so young a mother, or so beautiful an infant. For the first remark I sighed, but the last delighted my bosom; she indeed was one of the prettiest little mortals that ever the sun shone upon.

The next subject was praise of my poetry. I smile while I recollect how far the effrontery of flattery has power to belie the judgment. Mr. Fitzgerald took up the proof-sheet and read one of the pastorals. I inquired by what means he had

discovered my place of residence; he informed me that his carriage had followed me home on the preceding night. He now took his leave.

On the following evening he made us another visit; I say us, because Mr. Robinson was at home. Mr. Fitzgerald drank tea with us, and proposed making a party on the next day to dine at Richmond. To this I gave a decided negative; alleging that my duties toward my child prevented the possibility of passing a day absent from her.

A short time after, Mr. Robinson was arrested. Now came my hour of trial. He was conveyed to the house of a sheriff's officer, and in a few days detainers were lodged against him to the amount of twelve hundred pounds, chiefly the arrears of annuities and other demands from Jew creditors; for I can proudly and with truth declare that he did not at that time, or at any period since, owe fifty pounds for me, or to any tradesmen on my account whatever.

For myself I cared but little; all my anxiety was for Mr. Robinson's repose and the health of my child. The apartment which we obtained was in the upper part of the building, overlooking a racket-ground. Mr. Robinson was expert in all exercises of strength or activity, and he found that amusement daily which I could not partake of. I had other occupations of a more interesting nature,—the care of a beloved and still helpless daughter.[10]

The period now arrived when Mr. Robinson, by setting aside some debts, and by giving fresh bonds and fresh securities for others, once more obtained his liberty. I immediately conveyed the intelligence to my lovely Duchess of Devonshire, and she wrote me a letter of kind congratulation; she was then at Chatsworth.

The first moments of emancipation were delightful to the senses. I felt as though I had been newly born; I longed to see all my old and intimate associates, and almost forgot that they had so unworthily neglected me. Everything that had passed now appeared like a melancholy vision.

Mr. Robinson having once more obtained his liberty, how

[10] Writing of this time, Miss Hawkins states that Mrs. Robinson was "eminently meritorious: she had her child to attend to, she did all the work of their apartments, she even scoured the stairs, and accepted the writing and the pay which he had refused."

were we to subsist honorably and above reproach? He applied to his father, but every aid was refused; he could not follow his profession, because he had not completed his articles of clerkship.

It was at this moment of anxiety, of hope, of fear, that my thougths once more were turned to a dramatic life; and, walking with my husband in St. James's Park, late in the autumn, we were accosted by Mr. Brereton, of Drury Lane Theater. Mr. Brereton went home and dined with us; and after dinner the conversation turned on my partiality to the stage, which he earnestly recommended as a scene of great promise to what he termed my promising talents. I asked Mr. Robinson's opinion, and he now readily consented to my making the trial. He had repeatedly written to his father, requesting even the smallest aid toward our support until he could embark in his profession; but every letter remained unanswered.

Some time after this period, we removed to a more quiet situation, and occupied a very neat and comfortable suite of apartments in Newman Street. I was then some months advanced in a state of domestic solicitude, and my health seemed in a precarious state, owing to my having too long devoted myself to the duties of a mother in nursing my eldest daughter Maria. It was in this lodging that, one morning, wholly unexpectedly, Mr. Brereton made us a second visit, bringing with him a friend, whom he introduced on entering the drawing-room. This stranger was Mr. Sheridan.[11]

I was overwhelmed with confusion. I know not why, but I felt a sense of mortification when I observed that my appearance was carelessly *déshabillé*, and my mind as little prepared for what I guessed to be the motive of his visit. I, however, soon recovered my recollection, and the theater was consequently the topic of discourse.

At Mr. Sheridan's earnest entreaties, I recited some passages from Shakespeare. I was alarmed and timid; but the

[11] Richard Brinsley Sheridan was at this period in his twenty-fifth year, and had entered on his mismanagement of Drury Lane Theater. He had already written "The Rivals," which had not proved a success on its first appearance; "St. Patrick's Day, or the Scheming Lieutenant," a farce; "The Duenna," a comic opera; but he was yet to write "A Trip to Scarborough," and "The School for Scandal."

gentleness of his manners, and the impressive encouragement he gave me, dissipated my fears and tempted me to go on.

Mr. Sheridan had then recently purchased a share of Drury Lane Theater, in conjunction with Mr. Lacey and Doctor Ford; he was already celebrated as the author of "The Rivals" and "The Duenna," and his mind was evidently portrayed in his manners, which were strikingly and bewitchingly attractive.

The encouragement which I received in this essay, and the praises which Mr. Sheridan lavishly bestowed, determined me to make a public trial of my talents; and several visits, which were rapidly repeated by Mr. Sheridan, at length produced an arrangement for that period. My intention was intimated to Mr. Garrick, who, though he had for some seasons retired from the stage, kindly promised protection, and as kindly undertook to be my tutor.

The only objection which I felt to the idea of appearing on the stage was my then increasing state of domestic solicitude. I was, at the period when Mr. Sheridan was first presented to me, some months advanced in that situation which afterward, by the birth of Sophia, made me a second time a mother. Yet such was my imprudent fondness for Maria, that I was still a nurse; and my constitution was very considerably impaired by the effects of these combined circumstances.

An appointment was made in the greenroom of Drury Lane Theater. Mr. Garrick, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Brereton, and my husband were present; I there recited the principal scenes of Juliet (Mr. Brereton repeating those of Romeo), and Mr. Garrick without hesitation, fixed on that character as the trial of my début.

It is impossible to describe the various emotions of hope and fear that possessed my mind when the important day was announced in the playbills. I wrote to the Duchess of Devonshire at Chatsworth, informing her of my purposed trial, and received a kind letter of approbation, sanctioning my plan and wishing me success. Every longing of my heart seemed now to be completely gratified; and, with zeal bordering on delight, I prepared for my approaching effort.

Mr. Garrick had been indefatigable at the rehearsals, fre-

quently going through the whole character of Romeo himself until he was completely exhausted with the fatigue of recitation. This was only a short period before the death of that distinguished actor.

The theater was crowded with fashionable spectators; the greenroom and orchestra (where Mr. Garrick sat during the night) were thronged with critics. My dress was a pale pink satin, trimmed with crape, richly spangled with silver; my head was ornamented with white feathers, and my monumental suit, for the last scene, was white satin, and completely plain, excepting that I wore a veil of the most transparent gauze, which fell quite to my feet from the back of my head, and a string of beads around my waist, to which was suspended a cross appropriately fashioned.

When I approached the side wing, my heart throbbed convulsively; I then began to fear that my resolution would fail, and I leaned upon the nurse's arm, almost fainting. Mr. Sheridan and several other friends encouraged me to proceed; and at length, with trembling limbs and fearful apprehension, I approached the audience.

The thundering applause that greeted me nearly overpowered all my faculties. I stood mute and bending with alarm, which did not subside till I had feebly articulated the few sentences of the first short scene, during the whole of which I had never once ventured to look at the audience.

On my return to the greenroom I was again encouraged, as far as my looks were deemed deserving of approbation; for of my powers nothing yet could be known, my fears having as it were palsied both my voice and action. The second scene being the masquerade, I had time to collect myself. I never shall forget the sensation which rushed through my bosom when I first looked toward the pit. I beheld a gradual ascent of heads. All eyes were fixed upon me, and the sensation they conveyed was awfully impressive; but the keen, the penetrating eyes of Mr. Garrick, darting their luster from the center of the orchestra, were, beyond all others, the objects most conspicuous.[12]

[12] In his "History of the Stage," Genest tells us Mrs. Robinson made her first appearance on the stage as Juliet, on the 10th of December, 1776, but leaves us in ignorance regarding the actors who took part in

As I acquired courage, I found the applause augment; and the night was concluded with peals of clamorous approbation. I was complimented on all sides; but the praise of one object, whom most I wished to please, was flattering even to the extent of human vanity. I then experienced, for the first time in my life, a gratification which language could not utter. I heard one of the most fascinating men, and the most distinguished geniuses of the age, honor me with partial approbation. A new sensation seemed to awaken in my bosom; I felt that emulation which the soul delights to encourage, where the attainment of fame will be pleasing to the esteemed object. I had till that period known no impulse beyond that of friendship; I had been an example of conjugal fidelity; but I had never known the perils to which the feeling heart is subjected in a union of regard wholly uninfluenced by the affections of the soul.

The second character which I played was Amanda, in "A Trip to Scarborough,"[13] The play was altered from Vanbrugh's "Relapse;" and the audience, supposing it was a new piece, on finding themselves deceived, expressed a considerable degree of disapprobation. I was terrified beyond imagination when Mrs. Yates, no longer able to bear the hissing of the audience, quitted the scene, and left me alone to encounter the critical tempest. I stood for some moments as though I had been petrified. Mr. Sheridan, from the side wing, desired me not to quit the boards; the late Duke of Cumberland,[14] from the stage-box, bade me take courage: "It is not you, but the play, they hiss," said his Royal Highness. I curtseyed; and that curtsey seemed to electrify the whole house, for a thundering appeal of encouraging ap-

the tragedy. Romeo was evidently played by William Brereton, who had rehearsed the principal scenes with her in the greenroom before Sheridan and Garrick. Genest adds: "Mrs. Robinson was received with great applause. She had an engagement previous to her first appearance, and received what was considered a handsome salary. She was a most beautiful woman, and a very good breeches figure."

[13] According to Genest, the second character she attempted was Statira, in "Alexander the Great," played on the 17th of February, 1777; Amanda, in "The Trip to Scarborough," produced seven nights later, being her third personation.

[14] Ernest Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, and afterward King of Hanover, was the fifth son of George III., and perhaps the most profligate and unpopular member of the royal family.

plause followed. The comedy was suffered to go on, and is to this hour a stock play at Drury Lane Theater.

Mr. Sheridan now informed me he wished that I would accustom myself to appear in comedy, because tragedy seemed evidently, as well as my *forte*, to be my preference. At the same time he acquainted me that he wished me to perform a part in "The School for Scandal." I was now so unshaped by my increasing size that I made my excuses, informing Mr. Sheridan that probably I should be confined to my chamber at the period when his since celebrated play would first make its appearance. He accepted the apology, and in short time I gave to the world my second child, Sophia.

At the end of six weeks I lost my infant. She expired in my arms in convulsions, and my distress was indescribable. On the day of its dissolution Mr. Sheridan called on me; the little sufferer was on my lap, and I was watching it with agonizing anxiety. Five months had then elapsed since Mr. Sheridan was first introduced to me; and though, during that period, I had seen many proofs of his exquisite sensibility, I never had witnessed one which so strongly impressed my mind as his countenance on entering my apartment. Probably he has forgotten the feeling of the moment, but its impression will by me be remembered forever.

I had not power to speak. All he uttered was, "Beautiful little creature!" at the same time looking on my infant, and sighing with a degree of sympathetic sorrow which penetrated my soul. Had I ever heard such a sigh from a husband's bosom? Alas! I never knew the sweet, soothing solace of wedded sympathy; I never was beloved by him whom destiny allotted to be the legal ruler of my actions. I do not condemn Mr. Robinson; I but too well know that we cannot command our affections. I only lament that he did not observe some decency in his infidelities; and that while he gratified his own caprice, he forgot how much he exposed his wife to the most degrading mortifications.

The death of Sophia so deeply affected my spirits that I was rendered totally incapable of appearing again that season. I therefore obtained Mr. Sheridan's permission to visit Bath for the recovery of my repose.

Still restless, still perplexed with painful solicitudes, I

returned to London. I had not then, by many months, completed my nineteenth year. On my arrival I took lodgings in Leicester Square. Mr. Sheridan came to see me on my return to town, and communicated the melancholy fate of Mr. Thomas Linley,[15] the late brother of Mrs. Sheridan,—he was unfortunately drowned at the Duke of Ancaster's. In a few days after, Mr. Sheridan again made me a visit, with a proposal for an engagement to play during the summer at Mr. Colman's theater in the Haymarket.[16] I had refused several offers from provincial managers, and felt an almost insurmountable aversion to the idea of strolling. Mr. Sheridan nevertheless strongly recommended me to the acceptance of Mr. Colman's offer; and I at last agreed to it, upon condition that the characters I should be expected to perform were selected and limited. To this Mr. Colman readily consented.

It was now that I began to know the perils attendant on a dramatic life. It was at this period that the most alluring temptations were held out to alienate me from the paths of domestic quiet,—domestic happiness I cannot say, for it never was my destiny to know it. But I had still the consolation of an unsullied name. I had the highest female patronage, a circle of the most respectable and partial friends.

During this period I was daily visited by my best of mothers. My youngest brother had, the preceding winter, departed for Leghorn, where my eldest had been many years established as a merchant of the first respectability.

Were I to mention the names of those who held forth the temptations of fortune at this moment of public peril, I might create some reproaches in many families of the fashionable world.

The flattering and zealous attentions which Mr. Sheridan evinced were strikingly contrasting with the marked and in-

[15] Thomas Linley, who was considered "one of the finest violin players in Europe," was drowned through the upsetting of a boat on the 5th of August, 1778. He was a brother-in-law of Richard Brinsley Sheridan.

[16] George Colman, a popular and prolific dramatist, who in 1777 became manager of the Haymarket Theater, and continued as such until 1785, introducing meanwhile many new players and some dramatic novelties.

creasing neglect of my husband. I now found that he supported two women, in one house, in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden. Added to this, the bond creditors became so clamorous, that the whole of my benefits were appropriated to their demands; and on the second year after my appearance at Drury Lane Theater, Mr. Robinson once more persuaded me to make a visit at Tregunter.

I was now received with more civility, and more warmly welcomed, than I had been on any former arrival. Though the assumed sanctity of Miss Robinson's manners condemned a dramatic life, the labor was deemed profitable, and the supposed immorality was consequently tolerated! However repugnant to my feelings this visit was, still I hoped that it would promote my husband's interest, and confirm his reconciliation to his father; I therefore resolved on undertaking it. I now felt that I could support myself honorably; and the consciousness of independence is the only true felicity in this world of humiliations.

Mrs. Robinson, the promising young actress, was a very different personage from Mrs. Robinson who had been overwhelmed with sorrows, and came to ask an asylum under the roof of vulgar ostentation.

On my arrival in town I saw Mr. Sheridan, whose manner had lost nothing of its interesting attention. He continued to visit me very frequently, and always gave me the most friendly counsel. He knew that I was not properly protected by Mr. Robinson, but he was too generous to build his gratification on the detraction of another. The happiest moments I then knew were passed in the society of this distinguished being.

My popularity increasing every night that I appeared, my prospects, both of fame and affluence, began to brighten.

Mr. Sheridan was still my most esteemed of friends. He advised me with the gentlest anxiety, and he warned me of the danger which expense would produce, and which might interrupt the rising progress of my dramatic reputation. He saw the trophies which flattery strewed in my way; and he lamented that I was on every side surrounded with temptations. There was a something beautifully sympathetic in every word he uttered; his admonitions seemed as if dictated

by a prescient power, which told him that I was destined to be deceived!

I had then been married more than four years; my daughter Maria Elizabeth was nearly three years old. I had been then seen and known at all public places from the age of fifteen; yet I knew as little of the world's deceptions as though I had been educated in the deserts of Siberia. I believed every woman friendly, every man sincere, till I discovered proofs that their characters were deceptive.

The Duchess of Devonshire still honored me with her patronage and friendship, and I also possessed the esteem of several respectable and distinguished females.

The play of "The Winter's Tale" was this season commanded by their Majesties.[17] I never had performed before the royal family; and the first character in which I was destined to appear was that of Perdita. I felt a strange degree of alarm when I found my name announced to perform it before the royal family.[18]

In the greenroom I was rallied on the occasion; and Mr. Smith,[19] whose gentlemanly manners and enlightened conversation rendered him an ornament to the profession, who performed the part of Leontes, laughingly exclaimed, "By Jove, Mrs. Robinson, you will make a conquest of the prince, for to-night you look handsomer than ever." I smiled at the unmerited compliment, and little foresaw the vast variety of events that would arise from that night's exhibition!

I hurried through the first scene, not without much embarrassment, owing to the fixed attention with which the Prince of Wales honored me. Indeed, some flattering remarks which were made by his Royal Highness met my ear as I stood near his box, and I was overwhelmed with confusion.

The prince's particular attention was observed by every one, and I was again rallied at the end of the play. On the

[17] George III. and Queen Charlotte, who frequently attended the theater.

[18] This performance of "The Winter's Tale" took place on December 3, 1779, she being at that time in her twenty-second year, and the Prince of Wales in his eighteenth year.

[19] Smith had been educated at Eton and St. John's College, Cambridge, with a view to becoming a clergyman, but eventually went on the stage and proved himself an excellent actor, whose representation of Charles Surface was considered a finished performance.

last curtsey, the royal family condescendingly returned a bow to the performers; but just as the curtain was falling my eyes met those of the Prince of Wales, and with a look that I never shall forget, he gently inclined his head a second time; I felt the compliment, and blushed my gratitude.

I was now going to my chair, which waited, when I met the royal family crossing the stage. I was again honored with a very marked and low bow from the Prince of Wales. On my return home, I had a party to supper; and the whole conversation centered in encomiums on the person, graces, and amiable manners of the illustrious heir-apparent.

Within two or three days of this time, Lord Malden made me a morning visit. Mr. Robinson was not at home, and I received him rather awkwardly. But his lordship's embarrassment far exceeded mine. He attempted to speak—paused, hesitated, apologized; I knew not why. He hoped I would pardon him; that I would not mention something he had to communicate; that I would consider the peculiar delicacy of his situation, and then act as I thought proper. I could not comprehend his meaning, and therefore requested that he would be explicit.

After some moments of evident rumination, he tremblingly drew a small letter from his pocket. I took it, and knew not what to say. It was addressed to Perdita. I smiled, I believe rather sarcastically, and opened the *billet*. It contained only a few words, but those expressive of more than common civility; they were signed Florizel.[20]

"Well, my lord, and what does this mean?" said I, half angry.

"Can you not guess the writer?" said Lord Malden.

"Perhaps yourself, my lord," cried I, gravely.

"Upon my honor no," said the viscount. "I should not have dared so to address you on so short an acquaintance."

I pressed him to tell me from whom the letter came. He again hesitated; he seemed confused, and sorry that he had undertaken to deliver it.

"I hope that I shall not forfeit your good opinion," said he; "but—"

[20] Those who have read "The Winter's Tale" will know the significance of these adopted names.

"But what, my lord?"

"I could not refuse—for the letter is from the Prince of Wales."

I was astonished; I confess that I was agitated; but I was also somewhat skeptical as to the truth of Lord Malden's assertion. I returned a formal and a doubtful answer, and his lordship shortly after took his leave.

A thousand times did I read this short but expressive letter. Still I did not implicitly believe that it was written by the prince; I rather considered it as an experiment made by Lord Malden, either on my vanity or propriety of conduct. On the next evening the viscount repeated his visit. We had a card-party of six or seven, and the Prince of Wales was again the subject of unbounded panegyric. Lord Malden spoke of his Royal Highness's manners as the most polished and fascinating; of his temper as the most engaging; and of his mind, the most replete with every amiable sentiment. I heard these praises, and my heart beat with conscious pride, while memory turned to the partial but delicately respectful letter which I had received on the preceding morning.

The next day Lord Malden brought me a second letter. He assured me that the prince was most unhappy lest I should be offended at his conduct, and that he conjured me to go that night to the Oratorio,[21] where he would by some signal convince me that he was the writer of the letters, supposing I was still skeptical as to their authenticity.

I went to the Oratorio; and, on taking my seat in the balcony-box, the prince almost instantaneously observed me. He held the printed bill before his face, and drew his hand across his forehead, still fixing his eyes on me. I was confused, and knew not what to do. My husband was with me, and I was fearful of his observing what passed. Still the prince continued to make signs, such as moving his hand on the edge of the box as if writing, then speaking to the Duke of York [22] (then Bishop of Osnaburg), who also looked toward me with particular attention.

[21] The writer evidently makes a mistake in fixing the Oratorio for the next night.

[22] Frederick Augustus, Duke of York and Albany, second son of George III., who at the age of six months was elected to the valuable bishopric of Osnaburg.

I now observed one of the gentlemen in waiting bring the prince a glass of water; before he raised it to his lips he looked at me. So marked was his Royal Highness's conduct that many of the audience observed it; several persons in the pit directed their gaze at the place where I sat; and, on the following day, one of the diurnal prints observed that there was one passage in Dryden's Ode which seemed particularly interesting to the Prince of Wales, who—

"Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sigh'd, and look'd, and sigh'd again." [23]

However flattering it might have been to female vanity to know that the most admired and most accomplished prince in Europe was devotedly attached to me; however dangerous to the heart such idolatry as his Royal Highness, during many months, professed in almost daily letters, which were conveyed to me by Lord Malden, still I declined any interview with his Royal Highness. I was not insensible to all his powers of attraction; I thought him one of the most amiable of men. There was a beautiful ingenuousness in his language, a warm and enthusiastic adoration, expressed in every letter, which interested and charmed me. During the whole spring, till the theater closed, this correspondence continued, every day giving me some new assurance of inviolable affection.

After we had corresponded some months without ever speaking to each other (for I still declined meeting his Royal Highness, from a dread of the *éclat* which such a connection would produce, and the fear of injuring him in the opinion of his royal relatives), I received, through the hands of Lord

[23] Another of the "diurnal prints," dated February 12, 1780, is not so complimentary in its remarks, which run as follows: "A circumstance of rather an embarrassing nature happened at last night's Oratorio. Mrs. R——, decked out in all her finery, took care to post herself in one of the upper boxes immediately opposite the prince's, and by those airs peculiar to herself, contrived at last so to *basilisk* a certain heir-apparent, that his fixed attention to the beautiful object became generally noticed, and soon after astonished their Majesties, who, not being able to discover the cause, seemed at a loss to account for the extraordinary effect. No sooner, however, were they properly informed than a messenger was instantly sent aloft desiring the dart-dealing actress to withdraw, which she complied with, though not without expressing the utmost chagrin at her mortifying removal."

Malden, the prince's portrait in miniature, painted by the late Mr. Meyer. This picture is now in my possession. Within the case was a small heart cut in paper, which I also have; on one side was written, "*Je ne change qu'en mourant;*" on the other, "Unalterable to my Perdita through life."

During many months of confidential correspondence, I always offered his Royal Highness the best advice in my power; I disclaimed every sordid and interested thought; I recommended him to be patient till he should become his own master; to wait till he knew more of my mind and manners, before he engaged in a public attachment to me; and, above all, to do nothing that might incur the displeasure of his Royal Highness's family. I entreated him to recollect that he was young, and led on by the impetuosity of passion; that should I consent to quit my profession and my husband, I should be thrown entirely on his mercy. I strongly pictured the temptations to which beauty would expose him; the many arts that would be practiced to undermine me in his affections; the public abuse which calumny and envy would heap upon me; and the misery I should suffer, if, after I had given him every proof of confidence, he should change in his sentiments toward me. To all this I received repeated assurances of inviolable affection; and I most firmly believe that his Royal Highness meant what he professed—indeed, his soul was too ingenuous, his mind too liberal, and his heart too susceptible, to deceive premeditatedly, or to harbor even for a moment the idea of deliberate deception.

At every interview with Lord Malden I preceived that he regretted the task he had undertaken; but he assured me that the prince was almost frantic whenever he suggested a wish to decline interfering. Once I remember his lordship's telling me that the late Duke of Cumberland had made him a visit early in the morning, at his house in Clarges Street, informing him that the prince was most wretched on my account, and imploring him to continue his services only a short time longer. The prince's establishment was then in agitation; at this period his Royal Highness still resided in Buckingham House.

A proposal was now made that I should meet his Royal Highness at his apartments, in the disguise of male attire. I

was accustomed to perform in that dress, and the prince had seen me, I believe, in the character of the Irish Widow. To this plan I decidedly objected. The indelicacy of such a step, as well as the danger of detection, made me shrink from the proposal. My refusal threw his Royal Highness into the most distressing agitation, as was expressed by the letter which I received on the following morning. Lord Malden again lamented that he had engaged himself in the intercourse, and declared that he had himself conceived so violent a passion for me that he was the most miserable and unfortunate of mortals.

During this period, though Mr. Robinson was a stranger to my epistolary intercourse with the prince, his conduct was entirely neglectful. He was perfectly careless respecting my fame and my repose; passed his leisure hours with the most abandoned women, and even my own servants complained of his illicit advances. I remember one, who was plain even to ugliness; she was short, ill-made, squalid, and dirty; once, on my return from a rehearsal, I found that this woman was locked with my husband in my chamber. I also knew that Mr. Robinson continued his connection with a female who lodged in Maiden Lane, and who was only one of the few that proved his domestic apostacy.

His indifference naturally produced an alienation of esteem on my side, and the increasing adoration of the most enchanting of mortals hourly reconciled my mind to the idea of a separation. The unbounded assurances of lasting affection which I received from his Royal Highness in many scores of the most eloquent letters, the contempt which I experienced from my husband, and the perpetual labor which I underwent for his support, at length began to weary my fortitude. Still I was reluctant to become the theme of public animadversion, and still I remonstrated with my husband on the unkindness of his conduct.

THE NARRATIVE OF MRS. ROBINSON CLOSES HERE

ROBERT BURNS

THE NATIONAL POET OF SCOTLAND

1759-1796

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

The world is fortunate, indeed, in possessing Burns' own sketch of his life and estimate of his labors, even though the sketch be but a brief one. Burns wrote this outline in a letter to a friend, Dr. Moore, who had requested it. It was written in the first full tide of his success in Edinburgh, when he was hailed as the greatest of all poets, and life promised fair indeed.

To supplement the gay confidence of the autobiography we add some of Burns' most characteristic letters showing his later years. The grim tragedy of his life is too well known to need repeating. Born a peasant lad in an age when peasants were still regarded as being of different clay from the upper classes, Burns amazed the whole Scottish world by his genius. The gentry of Edinburgh welcomed him at first with open arms; but soon found that the problem of supporting him was a difficult one. Poetry did not yet pay as a profession, and Burns was of far too independent a spirit to accept charity. Moreover, the democratic spirit of his verse was scarcely likely to endear him to the aristocratic government. A government position was at length found for him; but it was such a mean one as to indicate that the government authorities thought of him as a peasant rather than as a poet. He was made a "gauger," or revenue officer, in charge of testing liquors and preventing the brewing or buying of these in secret among the countryfolk. This made of Burns a sort of spy upon his own people; and he accepted the position with disgust, and only under pressure of extreme necessity. He had married Jean Armour and had children. Shamed now and embittered, feeling his life a failure, Burns turned more and more to drink, as the only remaining source of pleasure or forgetfulness. His last letters will impress the reader in pitiful contrast to the rollicking tone of the earlier ones.

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Mauchline, August 2, 1787.

For some months past I have been rambling over the country, but I am now confined with some lingering complaints, originating, as I take it, in the stomach. To divert my spirits a little in this miserable fog of ennui, I have taken a whim to give you a history of myself. My name has made some little noise in this country; you have done me the honor to interest yourself very warmly in my behalf; and I think a faithful account of what character of a man I am, and how I came by that character, may perhaps amuse you in an idle moment. I will give you an honest narrative, though I know it will be, often at my own expense; for I assure you, sir, I have, like Solomon, whose character, excepting in the trifling affair of wisdom, I sometimes think I resemble—I have, I say, like him, turned my eyes to behold madness and folly, and like him, too, frequently shaken hands with their intoxicating friendship. After you have perused these pages, should you think them trifling and impertinent, I only beg leave to tell you that the poor author wrote them under some twitching qualms of conscience, arising from a suspicion that he was doing what he ought not to do; a predicament he has more than once been in before.

I have not the most distant pretensions to assume that character with the pye-coated guardians of escutcheons call a gentleman. When at Edinburgh last winter, I got acquainted in the Herald's office; and, looking through that granary of honors, I there found almost every name in the kingdom; but for me,

My ancient but ignoble blood
Has crept thro' scoundrels ever since the flood.

Gules, purpure, argent, etc., quite disowned me.

My father was of the north of Scotland, the son of a farmer, and was thrown by early misfortunes on the world at large; where, after many years' wanderings and sojournings, he picked up a pretty large quantity of observation and experience, to which I am indebted for most of my little pretensions to wisdom. I have met with few who understood men, their manners and their ways, equal to him; but stubborn,

ungainly integrity, and headlong, ungovernable irascibility, are disqualifying circumstances; consequently, I was born a very poor man's son. For the first six or seven years of my life, my father was gardener to a worthy gentleman of small estate in the neighborhood of Ayr. Had he continued in that station, I must have marched off to be one of the little underlings about a farmhouse; but it was his dearest wish and prayer to have it in his power to keep his children under his own eye, till they could discern between good and evil; so with the assistance of his generous master, my father ventured on a small farm on his estate.

At those years, I was by no means a favorite with anybody. I was a good deal noted for a retentive memory, a stubborn sturdy something in my disposition, and an enthusiastic idiotic piety. I say idiotic piety, because I was then but a child. Though it cost the schoolmaster some thrashings, I made an excellent English scholar; and by the time I was ten or eleven years of age, I was a critic in substantives, verbs, and particles. In my infant and boyish days, too, I owe much to an old woman who resided in the family, remarkable for her ignorance, credulity, and superstition. She had, I suppose, the largest collection in the country of tales and songs concerning devils, ghosts, fairies, brownies, witches, warlocks, spunkies, kelpies, elf-candles, dead-lights, wraiths, apparitions, cantraips, giants, enchanted towers, dragons, and other trumpery. This cultivated the latent seeds of poetry; but had so strong an effect on my imagination, that to this hour, in my nocturnal rambles, I sometimes keep a sharp lookout in suspicious places; and though nobody can be more skeptical than I am in such matters, yet it often takes an effort of philosophy to shake off these idle terrors.

The earliest composition that I recollect taking pleasure in, was "The Vision of Mirza," and a hymn of Addison's beginning, "How are thy servants blest, O Lord!" I particularly remember one half-stanza which was music to my boyish ear—

> For though on dreadful whirls we hung
> High on the broken wave—

I met with these pieces in Mason's English Collection, one of my schoolbooks. The first two books I ever read in private,

and which gave me more pleasure than any two books I ever read since, were "The Life of Hannibal," and "The History of Sir William Wallace." Hannibal gave my young ideas such a turn, that I used to strut in raptures up and down after the recruiting drum and bagpipe, and wish myself tall enough to be a soldier; while the story of Wallace poured a Scottish prejudice into my veins, which will boil along there till the floodgates of life shut in eternal rest.

Polemical divinity about this time was putting the country half mad, and I, ambitious of shining in conversation parties on Sundays, between sermons, at funerals, etc., used a few years afterward to puzzle Calvinism with so much heat and indiscretion, that I raised a hue and cry of heresy against me, which has not ceased to this hour.

My vicinity to Ayr was of some advantage to me. My social disposition, when not checked by some modifications of spirited pride, was like our catechism definition of infinitude, without bounds or limits. I formed several connections with other younkers, who possessed superior advantages; the youngling actors who were busy in the rehearsal of parts, in which they were shortly to appear on the stage of life, where, alas! I was destined to drudge behind the scenes. It is not commonly at this green age, that our young gentry have a just sense of the immense distance between them and their ragged playfellows. It takes a few dashes into the world to give the young great man that proper, decent, unnoticing disregard for the poor, insignificant, stupid devils, the mechanics and peasantry around him, who were, perhaps, born in the same village. My young superiors never insulted the clouterly appearance of my plowboy carcass, the two extremes of which were often exposed to all the inclemencies of all the seasons. They would give me stray volumes of books; among them, even then, I could pick up some observations, and one, whose heart, I am sure, not even the "Munny Begum" scenes have tainted, helped me to a little French.

Parting with these my young friends and benefactors, as they occasionally went off for the East or West Indies, was often to me a sore affliction; but I was soon called to more serious evils. My father's generous master died, the farm proved a ruinous bargain; and to clinch the misfortune, we fell

into the hands of a factor, who sat for the picture I have drawn of one in my tale of "Twa Dogs." My father was advanced in life when he married; I was the eldest of seven children, and he, worn out by early hardships, was unfit for labor. My father's spirit was soon irritated, but not easily broken. There was a freedom in his lease in two years more, and to weather these two years, we retrenched our expenses. We lived very poorly; I was a dexterous plowman for my age; and the next eldest to me was a brother (Gilbert), who could drive the plow very well, and help me to thrash the corn. A novel-writer might, perhaps, have viewed these scenes with some satisfaction, but so did not I; my indignation yet boils at the recollection of the scoundrel factor's insolent threatening letters, which used to set us all in tears.

This kind of life—the cheerless gloom of a hermit, with the unceasing moil of a galley slave, brought me to my sixteenth year; a little before which period I first committed the sin of rime. You know our country custom of coupling a man and woman together as partners in the labors of harvest. In my fifteenth autumn, my partner was a bewitching creature, a year younger than myself. My scarcity of English denies me the power of doing her justice in that language, but you know the Scottish idiom: she was a "bonnie, sweet, sonsie (engaging) lass." In short, she, altogether unwittingly to herself, initiated me in that delicious passion, which, in spite of acid disappointment, gin-horse prudence, and bookworm philosophy, I hold to be the first of human joys, our dearest blessing here below! How she caught the contagion I cannot tell; you medical people talk much of infection from breathing the same air, the touch, etc., but I never expressly said I loved her. Indeed I did not know myself why I liked so much to loiter behind with her, when returning in the evening from our labors; why the tones of her voice made my heartstrings thrill like an Æolian harp; and particularly why my pulse beat such a furious ratan, when I looked and fingered over her little hand to pick out the cruel nettle-stings and thistles. Among her other love-inspiring qualities, she sung sweetly; and it was her favorite reel to which I attempted giving an embodied vehicle in rime.

I was not so presumptuous as to imagine that I could make

verses like printed ones, composed by men who had Greek and Latin; but my girl sung a song which was said to be composed by a small country laird's son, on one of his father's maids, with whom he was in love; and I saw no reason why I might not rime as well as he; for, excepting that he could smear sheep, and cast peats, his father living in the moorlands, he had no more scholar-craft than myself.

Thus with me began love and poetry, which at times have been my only, and till within the last twelve months, have been my highest enjoyment. My father struggled on till he reached the freedom in his lease, when he entered on a larger farm, about ten miles farther in the country. The nature of the bargain he made was such as to throw a little ready money into his hands at the commencement of his lease, otherwise the affair would have been impracticable. For four years we lived comfortably here, but a difference commencing between him and his landlord as to terms, after three years' tossing and whirling in the vortex of litigation, my father was just saved from the horrors of a jail, by a consumption, which, after two years' promises, kindly stepped in, and carried him away, to where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest!

It is during the time that we lived on this farm that my little story is most eventful. I was, at the beginning of this period, perhaps the most ungainly, awkward boy in the parish—no hermit was less acquainted with the ways of the world. What I knew of ancient story was gathered from Salmon's and Guthrie's Geographical Grammars; and the ideas I had formed of modern manners, of literature, and criticism, I got from the Spectator. These, with Pope's Works, some Plays of Shakespeare, Tull and Dickson on Agriculture, the "Pantheon," Locke's "Essay on the Human Understanding," Stackhouse's "History of the Bible," Justice's "British Gardener's Directory," Boyle's "Lectures," Allan Ramsay's Works, Taylor's "Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin," "A Select Collection of English Songs," and Hervey's "Meditations," had formed the whole of my reading. The collection of songs was my companion, day and night. I pored over them, driving my cart, or walking to labor, song by song, verse by verse; carefully noting the true, tender, or sublime, from affectation and

fustian. I am convinced I owe to this practice much of my critic-craft, such as it is.

In my seventeenth year, to give my manners a brush, I went to a country dancing-school. My father had an unaccountable antipathy against these meetings, and my going was, what to this moment I repent, in opposition to his wishes. My father, as I said before, was subject to strong passions; from that instance of disobedience in me he took a sort of dislike to me, which, I believe, was one cause of the dissipation which marked my succeeding years. I say dissipation, comparatively with the strictness, and sobriety, and regularity of Presbyterian country life; for though the will-o'-wisp meteors of thoughtless whim were almost the sole lights of my path, yet early ingrained piety and virtue kept me for several years afterward within the line of innocence. The great misfortune of my life was to want an aim. I had felt early some stirrings of ambition, but they were the blind gropings of Homer's Cyclops round the walls of his cave.

I saw my father's situation entailed on me perpetual labor. The only two openings by which I could enter the temple of fortune were the gate of niggardly economy, or the path of little chicaning bargain-making. The first is so contracted an aperture I never could squeeze myself into it; the last I always hated—there was contamination in the very entrance! Thus abandoned of aim or view in life, with a strong appetite for sociability, as well from native hilarity as from a pride of observation and remark; a constitutional melancholy or hypochondriasm that made me fly solitude; add to these incentives to social life, my reputation for bookish knowledge, a certain wild logical talent, and a strength of thought, something like the rudiments of good sense; and it will not seem surprising that I was generally a welcome guest where I visited, or any great wonder that always, where two or three met together, there was I among them. But far beyond all other impulses of my heart, was a leaning toward the adorable half of humankind. My heart was completely tinder, and was eternally lighted up by some goddess or other; and, as in every other warfare in this world, my fortune was various; sometimes I was received with favor, and sometimes I was mortified with a repulse. At the plow, scythe, or reap-hook I feared no com-

petitor, and thus I set absolute want at defiance; and as I never cared further for my labors than while I was in actual exercise, I spent the evenings in the way after my own heart.

Another circumstance in my life which made some alteration in my mind and manners, was, that I spent my nineteenth summer on a smuggling coast, a good distance from home, at a noted school, to learn mensuration, surveying, dialing, etc., in which I made a pretty good progress. But I made a greater progress in the knowledge of mankind. The contraband trade was at that time very successful, and it sometimes happened to me to fall in with those who carried it on. Scenes of swaggering riot and roaring dissipation were, till this time, new to me; but I was no enemy to social life.

My reading meantime was enlarged with the very important addition of Thomson's and Shenstone's Works. I had seen human nature in a new phase; and I engaged several of my schoolfellows to keep up a literary correspondence with me. This improved me in composition. I had met with a collection of letters by the wits of Queen Anne's reign, and pored over them most devoutly. I kept copies of any of my own letters that pleased me, and a comparison between them and the composition of most of my correspondents flattered my vanity. I carried this whim so far that, though I had not three-farthings' worth of business in the world, yet almost every post brought me as many letters as if I had been a broad plodding son of the day-book and ledger.

My life flowed on much in the same course till my twenty-third year. The addition of two more authors to my library gave me great pleasure; Sterne and Mackenzie—"Tristram Shandy" and the "Man of Feeling"—were my bosom favorites. Poesy was still a darling walk for my mind, but it was only indulged in according to the humor of the hour. I had usually half a dozen or more pieces on hand; I took up one or other, as it suited the momentary tone of the mind, and dismissed the work as it bordered on fatigue. My passions, when once lighted up, raged like so many devils, till they got vent in rime; and then the conning over my verses, like a spell, soothed all into quiet! None of the rimes of those days are in print, except, "Winter, a Dirge," the eldest of my printed pieces; "The Death of Poor Maillie," "John

Barleycorn," and Songs First, Second and Third. Song Second was the ebullition of that passion which ended the forementioned school-business.

My twenty-third year, was to me an important era. Partly through whim, and partly that I wished to set about doing something in life, I joined a flax-dresser in a neighboring town (Irvine), to learn the trade. This was an unlucky affair. As we were giving a welcome carousal to the new year, the shop took fire and burned to ashes, and I was left, like a true poet, not worth a sixpence.

I was obliged to give up this scheme, the clouds of misfortune were gathering thick round my father's head; and, what was worst of all, he was visibly far gone in a consumption; and to crown my distresses, a beautiful girl, whom I adored, and who had pledged her soul to meet me in the field of matrimony, jilted me, with peculiar circumstances of mortification. The finishing evil that brought up the rear of this infernal file, was my constitutional melancholy being increased to such a degree, that for three months I was in a state of mind scarcely to be envied by the hopeless wretches who have got their mittimus—depart from me, ye cursed!

From this adventure I learned something of a town life; but the principal thing which gave my mind a turn, was a friendship I formed with a young fellow, a very noble character, but a hapless son of misfortune. He was the son of a simple mechanic; but a great man in the neighborhood taking him under his patronage, gave him a genteel education, with a view of bettering his situation in life. The patron dying just as he was ready to launch out into the world, the poor fellow in despair went to sea; where, after a variety of good and ill fortune, a little before I was acquainted with him he had been set on shore by an American privateer, on the wild coast of Connaught, stripped of everything. I cannot quit this poor fellow's story without adding, that he is at this time master of a large West Indiaman belonging to the Thames.

His mind was fraught with independence, magnanimity, and every manly virtue. I loved and admired him to a degree of enthusiasm, and of course strove to imitate him. In some measure I succeeded; I had pride before, but he taught it to flow in proper channels. His knowledge of the world was,

vastly superior to mine, and I was all attention to learn. . . . My reading only increased while in this town by two stray volumes of "Pamela," and one of "Ferdinand Count Fathom," which gave me some idea of novels. Rime, except some religious pieces that are in print, I had given up; but meeting with Fergusson's Scottish Poems, I strung anew my wildly sounding lyre with emulating vigor. When my father died, his all went among the hell-hounds that growl in the kennel of justice; but we made a shift to collect a little money in the family amongst us, with which to keep us together, my brother and I took a neighboring farm. My brother wanted my hare-brained imagination, as well as my social and amorous madness; but in good sense, and every sober qualification, he was far my superior.

I entered on this farm with a full resolution, "Come, go to, I will be wise!" I read farming books, I calculated crops; I attended markets; and in short, in spite of the devil, and the world, and the flesh, I believe I should have been a wise man; but the first year, from unfortunately buying bad seed, the second from a late harvest, we lost half our crops. This overset all my wisdom, and I returned, "like the dog to his vomit, and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire."

I now began to be known in the neighborhood as a maker of rimes. The first of my poetic offspring that saw the light was a burlesque lamentation on a quarrel between two reverend Calvinists, both of them figuring in my "Holy Fair." I had a notion myself that the piece had some merit; but, to prevent the worst, I gave a copy of it to a friend, who was very fond of such things, and told him that I could not guess who was the author of it, but that I thought it pretty clever. With a certain description of the clergy, as well as laity, it met with a roar of applause. "Holy Willie's Prayer" next made its appearance, and alarmed the kirk-session so much, that they held several meetings to look over their spiritual artillery, if happily any of it might be pointed against profane rimers. Unluckily for me, my wanderings led me on another side, within point-blank shot of their heaviest metal. This is the unfortunate story that gave rise to my printed poem, "The Lament." This was a most melancholy affair, which I cannot

yet bear to reflect on, and had very nearly given me one or two of the principal qualifications for a place among those who have lost the chart, and mistaken the reckoning of rationality. I gave up my part of the farm to my brother; in truth it was only nominally mine; and made what little preparation was in my power for Jamaica.

But before leaving my native country forever, I resolved to publish my poems. I weighed my productions as impartially as was in my power; I thought they had merit; and it was a delicious idea that I should be called a clever fellow, even though it should never reach my ears—a poor Negro driver—or perhaps a victim to that inhospitable clime, and gone to the world of spirits! I can truly say that, poor and unknown as I then was, I had pretty nearly as high an idea of myself and of my works as I have at this moment, when the public has decided in their favor. It ever was my opinion that the mistakes and blunders, both in a rational and religious point of view, of which we see thousands daily guilty, are owing to their ignorance of themselves. To know myself had been all along my constant study. I weighed myself alone; I balanced myself with others. I watched every means of information, to see how much ground I occupied as a man and as a poet; I studied assiduously Nature's design in my formation—where the lights and shades in my character were intended. I was pretty confident my poems would meet with some applause; but at the worst, the roar of the Atlantic would deafen the voice of censure, and the novelty of West Indian scenes make me forget neglect. I threw off six hundred copies, of which I had got subscriptions for about three hundred and fifty. My vanity was highly gratified by the reception I met with from the public; and besides I pocketed, all expenses deducted, nearly twenty pounds. This sum came very seasonably, as I was thinking of indenting myself for want of money to procure my passage. As soon as I was master of nine guineas, the price of wafting me to the torrid zone, I took a steerage passage in the first ship that was to sail from the Clyde, for

Hungry ruin had me in the wind.

I had been for some days skulking from covert to covert, under all the terrors of a jail; as some ill-advised people had

uncoupled the merciless pack of the law at my heels. I had taken the last farewell of my few friends; my chest was on the road to Greenock; I had composed the last song I should ever measure in Caledonia—"The Gloomy Night Is Gathering Fast," when a letter from Dr. Blacklock to a friend of mine, overthrew all my schemes, by opening new prospects to my poetic ambition. The doctor belonged to a set of critics for whose applause I had not dared to hope. His opinion, that I would meet with encouragement in Edinburgh for a second edition, fired me so much, that away I posted for that city, without a single acquaintance, or a single letter of introduction. The baneful star that had so long shed its blasting influence in my zenith for once made a revolution to the nadir; and a kind Providence placed me under the patronage of one of the noblest of men, the Earl of Glencairn. *Oublie moi, grand Dieu, si jamais je l'oublie.*[1]

I need relate no further. At Edinburgh I was in a new world; I mingled among many classes of men, but all of them new to me, and I was all attention to "catch" the characters and "the manners living as they rise." Whether I have profited, time will show.

A LATER LETTER TO THE SAME FRIEND EXPANDING THE PREVIOUS SKETCH

The character and employment of a poet were formerly my pleasure, but are now my pride. I know that a very great deal of my late *éclat* was owing to the singularity of my situation, and the honest prejudice of Scotsmen; but still, as I said in the preface to my first edition, I do look upon myself as having some pretensions from nature to the poetic character. I have not a doubt but the knack, the aptitude, to learn the muses' trade, is a gift bestowed by Him "Who forms the secret bias of the soul"; but I as firmly believe that *excellence* in the profession is the fruit of industry, labor, attention, and pains. At least I am resolved to try my doctrine by the test of experience. Another appearance from the press I put off to a very distant day, a day that may never arrive—but poesy I am determined to prosecute with all my vigor. Nature has given very few, if any, of the profession, the talents of shin-

[1] Forget me, Great God, if I ever forget him!

ing in every species of composition. I shall try (for until trial it is impossible to know) whether she has qualified me to shine in any one. The worst of it is, by the time one has finished a piece, it has been so often viewed and reviewed before the mental eye, that one loses in a good measure, the power of critical discrimination. Here the best criterion I know is a friend—not only of abilities to judge, but with good nature enough like a prudent teacher with a young learner to praise a little more than is exactly just, lest the thin-skinned animal fall into that most deplorable of all diseases—heart-breaking despondency of himself. Dare I, sir, already immensely indebted to your goodness, ask the additional obligation of your being that friend to me?

A TYPICAL LETTER TO HIS FRIEND MR. JAMES SMITH OF LINLITHGOW

June 30, 1787.

My Dear Friend,—On our return, at a Highland gentleman's hospitable mansion we fell in with a merry party, and danced till the ladies left us at three in the morning. Our dancing was none of the French or English insipid, formal movements. The ladies sang Scotch songs at intervals like angels; then we flew at "Bab at the Bowster," "Tullochgorum," "Locherroch Side," etc., like midges sporting in the mottie sun, or craws prognosticating a storm in a hairst day. When the dear lasses left us, we ranged round the bowl till the good-fellow hour of six; except a few minutes that we went out to pay our devotions to the glorious lamp of day peering over the towering top of Ben Lomond. We all kneeled. Our worthy landlord's son held the bowl, each man a full glass in his hand, and I, as priest, repeated some riming nonsense; like Thomas the Rimer's prophecies, I suppose.

After a small refreshment of the gifts of Somnus, we proceeded to spend the day on Loch Lomond, and reached Dumbarton in the evening. We dined at another good fellow's house, and consequently pushed the bottle; when we went out to mount our horses, we found ourselves "no very fou, but gayly yet." My two friends and I rode soberly down the loch side, till by came a Highlandman at the gallop on a tolerably good horse, but which had never known the ornaments

of iron or leather. We scorned to be out-galloped by a Highlandman, so off we started, whip and spur. My companions, though seemingly gayly mounted, fell sadly astern; but my old mare, Jenny Geddes, one of the Rosinante family, strained past the Highlandman, in spite of all his efforts with the hair halter. Just as I was passing him, Donald wheeled his horse, as if to cross before me to mar my progress, when down came his horse, and threw his rider's breekless bottom into a clipt hedge, and down came Jenny Geddes over all, and my bardship between her and the Highlandman's horse. Jenny trod over me with such cautious reverence that matters were not so bad as might well have been expected; so I came off with a few cuts and bruises, and a thorough resolution to be a pattern of sobriety for the future. As for the rest of my acts and my wars, and all my wise sayings, and why my mare was called Jenny Geddes, they shall be recorded in a few weeks hence at Linlithgow, in the chronicles of your memory.

R. B.

A LETTER TO MRS. DUNLOP ON HIS RELIGIOUS VIEWS

Ellisland, New Year Day Morning, 1789.

This, dear madam, is a morning of wishes, and would to God that I came under the Apostle James's description!—"the prayer of a righteous man availeth much." In that case, madam, you should welcome in a year full of blessings: everything that obstructs or disturbs tranquillity and self-enjoyment should be removed, and every pleasure that frail humanity can taste should be yours. I own myself so little a Presbyterian, that I approve set times and seasons of more than ordinary acts of devotion, for breaking in on that habituated routine of life and thought which is so apt to reduce our existence to a kind of instinct, or even sometimes, and with some minds, to a state very little superior to mere machinery.

This day and the first Sunday of May, a breezy, blue-skied noon some time about the beginning, and a hoary morning and calm sunny day about the end, of autumn—these, time out of mind, have been with me a kind of holiday.

I believe I owe this to that glorious paper in the Spectator, "The Vision of Mirza," a piece that struck my young fancy before I was capable of fixing an idea to a word of three

syllables: "On the 5th day of the moon, which, according to the custom of my forefathers, I always *keep holy*, after having washed myself and offered up my morning devotions, I ascended the high hill of Bagdad, in order to pass the rest of the day in meditation and prayer."

We know nothing, or next to nothing, of the substance or structure of our souls, so cannot account for those seeming caprices in them that one should be particularly pleased with this thing, or struck with that, which on minds of a different cast makes no extraordinary impression. I have some favorite flowers in spring, among which are the mountain-daisy, the harebell, the foxglove, the wild-brier rose, the budding birch, and the hoary hawthorn, that I view and hang over with particular delight. I never hear the loud, solitary whistle of the curlew in a summer noon, or the wild mixing cadence of a troop of gray plovers in an autumnal morning, without feeling an elevation of soul like the enthusiasm of devotion or poetry. Tell me, my dear friend, to what can this be owing? Are we a piece of machinery, which, like the Æolian harp, passive, takes the impression of the passing accident? Or do these workings argue something within us above the trodden clod? I own myself partial to such proofs of those awful and important realities—a God that made all things—man's immaterial and immortal nature—and a world of weal or woe beyond death and the grave! R. B.

A LETTER TO MR. PETER HILL OF EDINBURGH DESCRIBING BURNS' WORK AS A GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL

Ellisland, Feb. 2, 1790.

No! I will not say one word about apologies or excuses for not writing—I am a poor, rascally gauger, condemned to gallop at least 200 miles every week to inspect dirty ponds and yeasty barrels, and where can I find time to write to, or importance to interest anybody? The upbraidings of my conscience, nay, the upbraidings of my wife, have persecuted me on your account these two or three months past. I wish to God I was a great man, that my correspondence might throw light upon you, to let the world see what you really are; and then I would make your fortune, without putting my hand in my pocket for you, which, like all other great men, I suppose I

would avoid as much as possible. What are you doing, and how are you doing?

R. B.

A LETTER TO MR. GRAHAM OF FINTRAY, WRITTEN IN FEAR OF LOSING THE GOVERNMENT POSITION

December, 1792.

Sir,—I have been surprised, confounded, and distracted by Mr. Mitchel, the collector, telling me that he has received an order from your board to inquire into my political conduct, and blaming me as a person disaffected to government.

Sir, you are a husband—and a father. You know what you would feel, to see the much-loved wife of your bosom, and your helpless, prattling little ones, turned adrift into the world, degraded and disgraced from a situation in which they had been repectable and respected, and left almost without the necessary support of a miserable existence. Alas, sir! must I think that such soon will be my lot! and from the d——d dark insinuations of hellish, groundless envy, too! I believe, sir, I may aver it, and in the sight of Omniscience, that I would not tell a deliberate falsehood, no, not though even worse horrors, if worse can be, than those I have mentioned, hung over my head; and I say, that the allegation, whatever villain has made it, is a lie! To the British constitution, on Revolution principles, next after my God, I am most devoutly attached. You, sir, have been much and generously my friend. Heaven knows how warmly I have felt the obligation, and how gratefully I have thanked you. Fortune, sir, has made you powerful, and me impotent; has given you patronage, and me dependence. I would not for my single self call on your humanity; were such my insular, unconnected situation, I would despise the tear that now swells in my eye—I could brave misfortune, I could face ruin; for at the worst, "Death's thousand doors stand open;" but, good God! the tender concerns that I have mentioned, the claims and ties that I see at this moment, and feel around me, how they unnerve courage and wither resolution! To your patronage, as a man of some genius, you have allowed me a claim; and your esteem, as an honest man, I know is my due: to these, sir, permit me to appeal; by these may I adjure you to save me

from that misery which threatens to overwhelm me, and which, with my latest breath I will say it, I have not deserved.

R. B.

A DYING LETTER TO HIS FRIEND MR. G. THOMSON

Brow, on the Solway Firth, July 12, 1796.

After all my boasted independence, curst necessity compels me to implore you for five pounds. A cruel wretch of a haberdasher, to whom I owe an account, taking it into his head that I am dying, has commenced a process, and will infallibly put me into jail. Do, for God's sake, send me that sum, and that by return of post. Forgive me this earnestness, but the horrors of a jail have made me half distracted. I do not ask all this gratuitously; for, upon returning health, I hereby promise and engage to furnish you with five pounds' worth of the neatest song-genius you have seen. I tried my hand on "Rothemurche" this morning. The measure is so difficult that it is impossible to infuse much genius into the lines; they are on the other side. Forgive, forgive me!

THE END

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